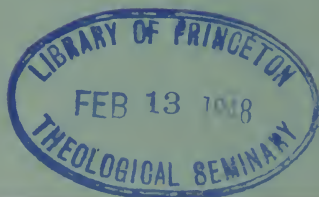


ALBRIGHT  
AND HIS  
CO-LABORERS



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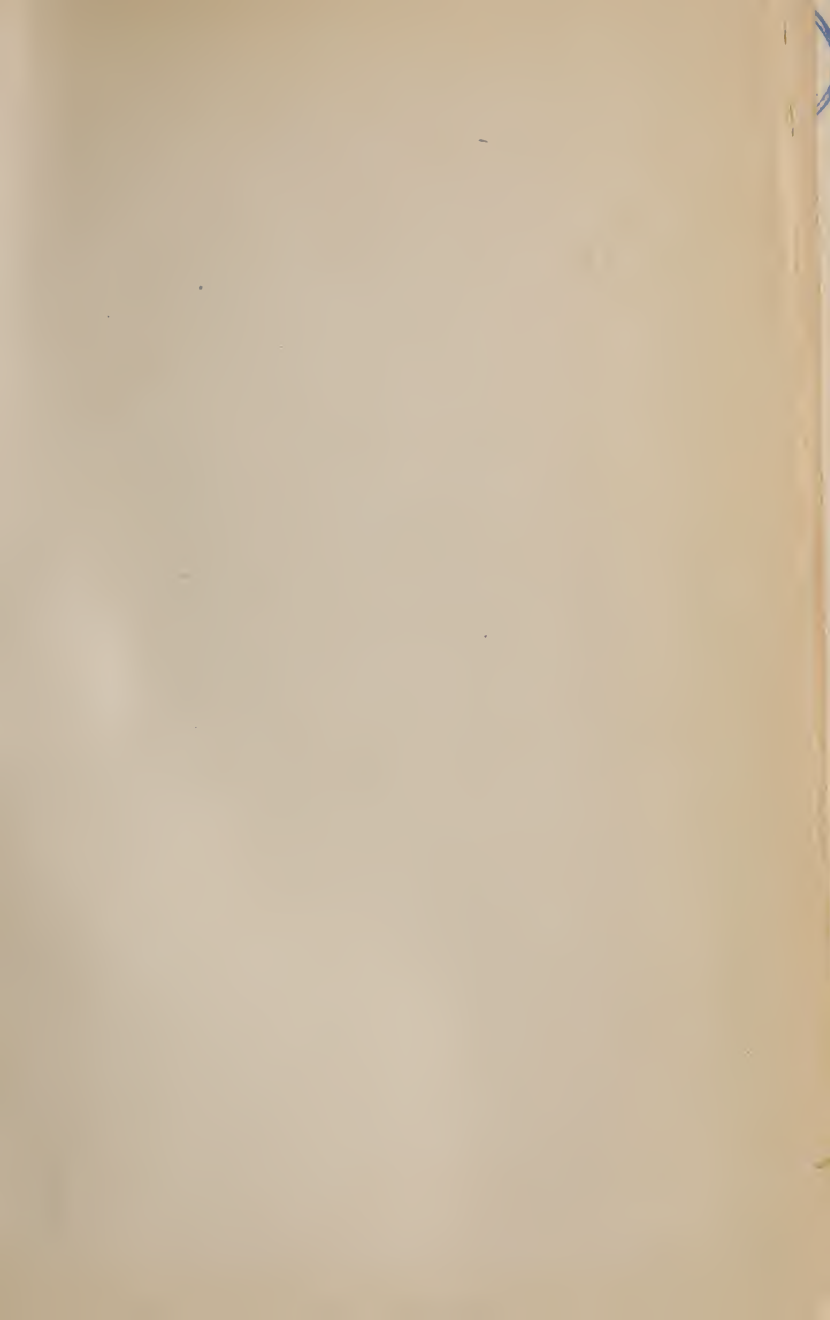
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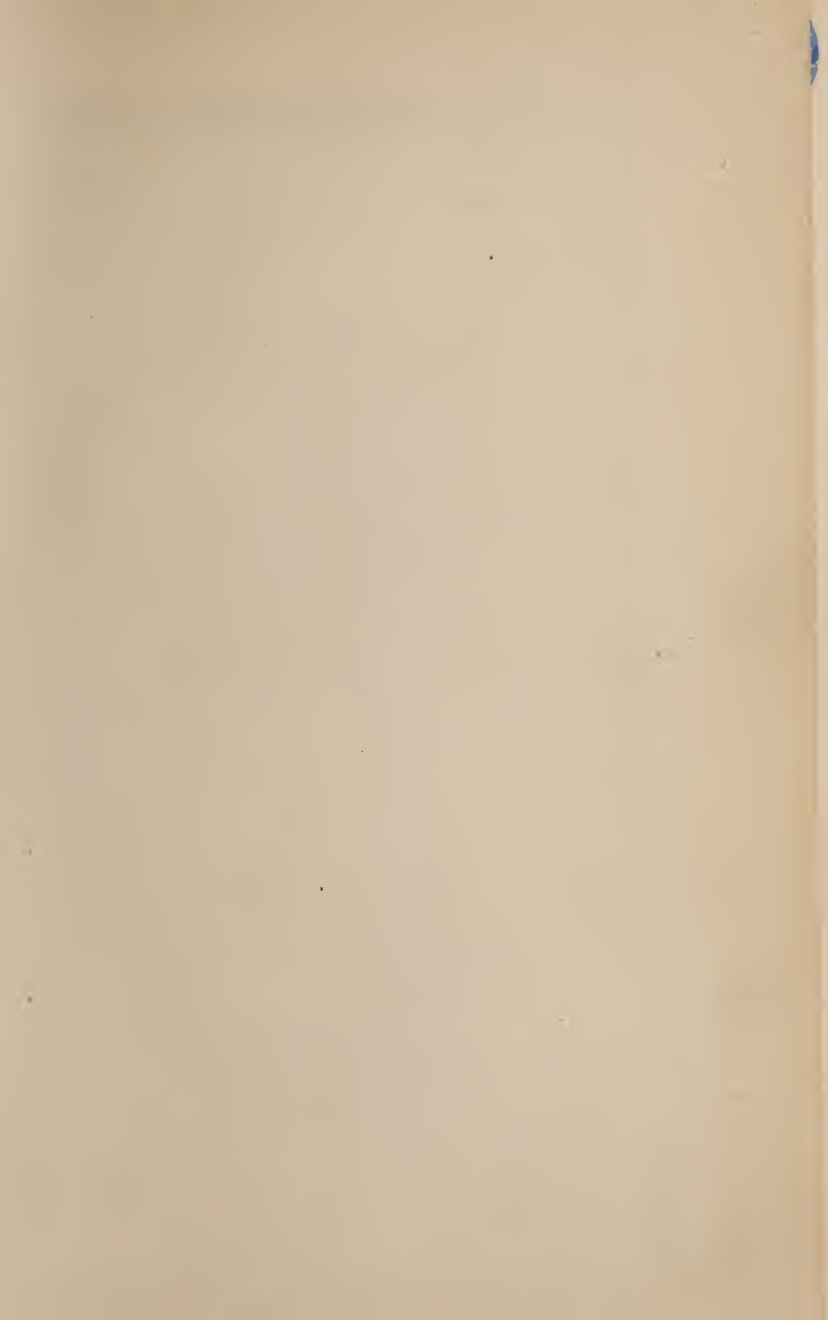
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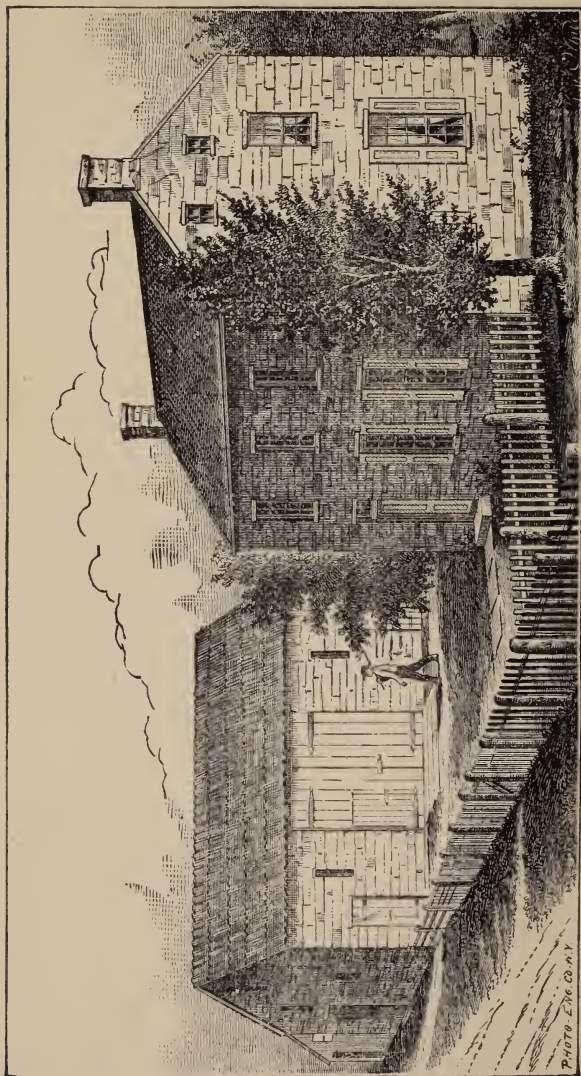




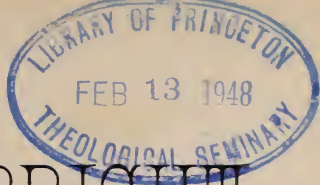








The house in which Jacob Albright was born.—(See p. II.)



# JACOB ALBRIGHT

AND HIS

## CO-LABORERS.

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Compiled, according to the direction of the General Conference of the

EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION,

BY

R. YEAHEL.

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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.



CLEVELAND, O.

Publishing House of the Evangelical Association,

LAUER & YOST, Agents.

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1883.

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## PREFACE.

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WHEN the General Conference of the Evangelical Association authorized the undersigned to compile a book entitled: "Albright and his Co-Laborers," and for this purpose to "exhaust all sources," that honorable body, as well as the compiler, could not realize how many difficulties it involved. The description of these alone would constitute a volume. The sainted Albright had written very little besides his Journal, and this was suffered to be lost without any one making an abstract of it. Many of the fathers and mothers, who had personally known the sainted founder of our Church, had followed him into eternal rest, when the undersigned had this work assigned him. Aside from the highly respected John Dreisbach, there were very few who could communicate anything in a connected form. Father Dreisbach, however, imparted some very valuable information. A large part of this volume originated from oral conversations with him, which are interwoven in its text. But to "exhaust all sources" required much time, and the study of these sources, and the arrangement of the results, was a very difficult task. Nor did the compiler have any special time allotted him for this purpose. Other duties devolving upon him pressed him continually into other spheres of labor. In consequence of this, both material and time for this work consisted of "fragments," and it became almost an impossibility to complete it. But, thank God, it is finished! The unavoidable imperfections of the book are sensibly realized by the author — thirty

years earlier it could have been done much better — *now we must be satisfied with fragments!* But if these become as precious and edifying to the reader, as they were to the author, then all painstaking is richly rewarded, and the labor not spent in vain.

May the God of our fathers and their children grant it !

R. Y.

NORRISTOWN, PA., Dec., 1877.

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## PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION.

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THE original of the Life of Albright and his Co-Laborers in German, contains many extracts from documents that belong to a former generation. Accordingly, the style or composition is somewhat different from the style of that of the present day, and it was not deemed proper, in a historical work, to fully re-cast it. This principle was also duly regarded by the translator, which, however, made the work of the translator and that of the editor more difficult than it would have been to re-write the book in the English language. Bearing this in mind, the intelligent and sincere reader will, no doubt, find these simple and unembellished life stories of these men of God highly edifying and spiritually beneficial, as setting forth in part the wonderful ways of God with his servants and his people. That this book may serve to show to the younger and English portion of the Evangelical Association "what God hath wrought" through the fathers, and induce them to seek and walk in the same spirit, is the sincere prayer of

R. Y.



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# LIFE AND LABORS

OF THE SAINTED

**JACOB ALBRIGHT,**

THROUGH THE GRACE OF GOD

THE FOUNDER OF

THE EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION.



"HE IS A CHOSEN VESSEL UNTO ME."—Acts 9. 13.





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# LIFE AND LABORS

— OF —

## JACOB ALBRIGHT.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### Jacob Albright's Descent and Temporal Circumstances.

---

##### HIS DESCENT.

JACOB Albright's father, John Albright, came from Germany to America in the eighteenth century—the year of his immigration could not be ascertained—and located in Montgomery County, State of Pennsylvania, in a region then called *Fuchsberg* (Fox Mountain), about three miles north-west of Pottstown. Here, on the 1st of May, 1759, Jacob Albright was born. The house which was his first home, a plain, substantial two-story stone building, still remains. His parents were poor. They *were compelled* to labor hard, in order to secure a livelihood for themselves and their large family on that sterile soil. The locality still reminds one of the Scripture passage in which the seer prophesies of Christ: "For he shall grow

up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground" (Isa. 52. 2), or of the upright Nathanael, who, when he heard of the home of Jesus, exclaimed in astonishment, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Thus might a person if he saw the neighborhood whence Albright came, without knowing what God hath wrought through him, also ask: "Can any good or great thing come from Fox Mountain?" But, from just such localities, and out of the poorer classes of society, does God often call his servants and bring forth his chosen vessels. In this respect, too, are his ways higher than our ways, and not rarely do they transcend our comprehension. Under such circumstances young Albright was early accustomed to hard labor and profound reflection. Of his youthful years, however, very little is known. His parents were members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. They had their son Jacob baptized in his infancy by a Lutheran minister.

#### HIS PERSON.

In personal appearance Albright was fine and prepossessing, being rather taller than medium size. He had a high forehead, blue, clear and somewhat deeply set and penetrating eyes, a well-formed, slightly bent nose, with mouth and chin in good proportion. His face was somewhat narrow and oblong, his hair black, complexion fair, and body



symmetrically formed. In him the sanguine and choleric temperaments were well balanced. His movements were quick, but always *graceful*. When, in later years, he became a minister of the Gospel, his personal appearance made such a good impression upon the people, that sometimes the remark was made: "Why, this man looks like an angel." His personal habits were excellent. In his person and dress he was very neat and tidy, always careful not to blot anything when engaged in writing. *In everything he was punctual*. When he left his room in the morning, the bed, chairs, etc., were found in good order. Cleanliness and proper decorum were very marked in his character, and he inculcated them as far as his influence extended.

#### HIS FAMILY.

In the year 1785, hence in his twenty-sixth year, he entered into holy wedlock with Catharine Cope, and soon after moved to Lancaster County, Pa. Their union was blessed with nine children, of whom, however, only three—two sons and one daughter—survived him. This daughter, Sarah, the eldest of the three children, was married to Noah Ranck. The young couple soon after their marriage moved to Tioga County, Pa. Both were converted to God, and one of their sons, Jacob Ranck, became a minister in the Evangelical Association.

As Albright was once traveling from his home to several appointments, in company with one of his co-laborers, he remarked to him: "It makes a person feel sad, to go out into the world to preach repentance and conversion, when one's own family is yet unconverted, but I still have hope for my Sarah." In this hope he was not disappointed.

Jacob, the eldest son, died without a family. David, his youngest son, was united in marriage with Mary Riedenbach, to whom were born eleven children. This son led an intemperate life, until a short time before his death, when he commenced to manifest some interest in his salvation. His widow and a few of her children are members of the Evangelical Association in Lancaster County, Pa.

The widow of Albright died in 1828. She lived and died a member of the Reformed Church. With the work, and especially with the great self-denial of her husband, she had no sympathy and was the cause of adding many hours of suffering to his other heavy crosses, to which, of course, the slanders that were fabricated against him by the enemies of Christianity contributed not a little.

#### TEMPORAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

Albright was an industrious and thorough man of business. Prior to his conversion and entrance upon the ministry, he carried on the business of manufacturing tiles and brick. Inasmuch as at

that time many buildings were covered with tiles his business, which he thoroughly understood, was very lucrative, hence, within a few years he had accumulated sufficient property to secure the support of his family. As he received but a very meagre pecuniary support during his ministry, he frequently returned home and prepared a kiln of brick or tiles, leaving them for his wife to dispose of, while he went to fill his appointments. In this way he supported his family during his itinerancy; hence the accusations of his enemies, that he neglected his family, are false. Had he not been called into the ministry he would in all probability have become a wealthy man; for, notwithstanding his great sacrifices for the cause of Christ, his administrator reported his estate to be worth from three to four thousand dollars which, at that time, was considered quite a fortune. Through his business he had become widely known, so that his strict honesty and punctuality commanded the respect of his neighbors and customers, among whom he was known as the "honest tiler," his account books, still extant, being evidence how promptly he paid his shoemaker, weaver and others.

The "title" which the founder of the Evangelical Association won through his business, is no more dishonorable to him and the Evangelical Association than it is for Christ and his Church,

that it was said of him, "Is not this the *carpenter*, Mary's son?" The Evangelical Association had no Doctor of Theology for her founder, yet by the grace of God she had an "honest tiler" and servant of the Lord Jesus Christ as her "builder."\* (1 Cor. 3. 10.)



## CHAPTER II.

## Albright's Abilities.

## NATURAL ABILITIES.

ALBRIGHT naturally possessed the inestimable gift of good, sound common-sense. In temporal affairs he comprehended subjects quickly and usually correctly, and hence he often imparted good and wholesome advice. After his understanding had been enlightened by the Holy Spirit, he had an unusually clear insight into Divine things. He had a meditative mind, sufficiently balanced, however, by a lively and moderately choleric temperament to shield him from melancholy. He possessed a large amount of sharp mother-wit, which at times he used to good account against his persecutors, especially during the later years of his life. His gift of public address also deserves to be noticed; although he himself several times, through extreme modesty, declared that he possessed no such gift, yet many, who heard him, testified that more than one talent was entrusted to him in this respect. In his sermons his utterances often flowed like a stream, which carried his auditors with him, and even elicited the admiration and wonder of his enemies.

## ACQUIRED ABILITIES.

In the times of Albright the German schools in Pennsylvania were in a very sad condition. The State did not concern itself about the education of the young; the free school system was unknown at that time. Even the private schools, in which reading, writing, and arithmetic were but imperfectly taught, were of an inferior character. The study of Grammar, Geography, and History was unknown in that section, and even books and newspapers were scarce and poor. The country was still new, and mostly a wilderness in which Indians and wild beasts roamed about at pleasure. To the few higher schools only the wealthy could send their children. Into such a private school Jacob Albright was sent by his parents, and there learned to read, write and cipher in the German language. But a spirit like his does not stop at such beginnings, and if the necessary means are lacking, he strives to help himself. Such a course was pursued by Albright. Although he had spent his youthful years among strangers, where he heard only the Pennsylvania German dialect, yet he acquired a fair knowledge of the German language, and later, in his preaching, he spoke good German.

With the help of an English dictionary he also mastered the English language to such an extent, that he could deliver an English address, when circumstances required it.



With the exception of a commentary, which he valued very highly, Albright had very few books. The Bible, Catechism and Hymn-book were a great treasure to him.



## CHAPTER III.

**Albright's Condition prior to his Conversion.**

---

**HIS FORMER CHURCH RELATION.**

**A**LBRIGHT was baptized in his infancy by a Lutheran minister; received catechetical instruction according to the doctrines of that Church, was confirmed, admitted to the Lord's Supper, and received as a member of the Lutheran Church in Douglas Township, Montgomery County, Pa.

The condition of the German Churches in Eastern Pennsylvania was at that time very sad. Nothing was known of true conversion. Prayer-meetings, Bible readings, family devotions, Sabbath-schools, revivals, etc., were entirely neglected. There was hardly any appearance of godliness, and even when the power of the same would occasionally manifest itself somewhat, it was decried as fanaticism. The salt (the Church) "had lost its savor, and wherewith should it be salted?"

**HIS MORAL CONDITION.**

The natural result following the lack and denial of spiritual power in the Church was, that Church-members with non-Church-members sunk into sin and corruption—yea, sin reigned to a terrible extent, both in the pulpit and out of it. This deluge also carried young Albright along. Upon



this point he himself speaks in the following manner :

“I walked frivolously in the path of a carnal life, rejoiced with those who rejoiced, and thought little about the object of human life, regarding not the duty of man, much less that of a Christian. I lived as though this little span of duration would last eternally, and committed many sins, for which God threatened severe punishment.”

It was with Albright, as it was with the majority of Church-members, who, after baptism, catechetical instruction, confirmation, Lord's Supper and reception as members in the Church regarded themselves licensed from that time forth to live in sin, and instead of reforming, continually became worse.



## CHAPTER IV.

## Conversion and Religious Experience.

## AWAKENING.

“FOR the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world.”—Titus 2. 11, 12.

This forerunning and saving grace took hold of Albright, to draw him out of the horrible pit and the mire of sin. The first workings of the saving grace of God upon him, he describes in the following language: “In such a condition of heart (as previously described) most persons seem to be happy, perhaps many also thus judged of me. While I seemed to be contented, and cheerfulness was seen upon my countenance, yet I was not really happy, and I do not believe that a person in such a condition can be truly happy. After the enjoyment of all the pleasures that the world can offer, there remains an aching void within, and disquietude reigns in the heart, which awakens a painful feeling—this is the secret voice of conscience, embittering all forbidden pleasures. True joy and abiding happiness are realized only

through a conscious presence of the grace of God in Christ, and a faithful discharge of duty. Oh! how often I heard the whispers of this voice. At times it spoke very loudly; and when guilty of some sinful action, or having left some good deed undone, it seemed to accuse me, so that I condemned myself for disobedience against the precepts of virtue and the commandments of my Creator. At first I gave but little heed to the voice of this monitor; however, as I still somewhat listened to it, it repeated its admonitions more forcibly, and the more attention I paid to it, the louder it spoke in my soul, until I finally began to get an insight into my sinful state, and in an imperfect way I resolved to reform. However, this resolution remained only a plan, which was not executed, because the carnal mind opposed it."

While Albright was thus faltering between light and darkness, it pleased the Lord, in the year 1790, to afflict his family with sickness, and several of his children died. He regarded this as a chastisement, and realized that the hand of the Lord was heavily upon him. At the funeral of his children a Reformed minister, named Anton Hautz, who had the reputation of being a converted man, officiated. The word of God found way to his heart, which was already very contrite, so that he was deeply impressed and became willing to seek the Lord immediately.

## HIS REPENTANCE.

“Knowest thou not that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?”—Rom. 2. 4.

At this time certain interventions of Divine Providence had a great influence upon Albright, which he describes as follows: “On several occasions I was in great danger of losing my life, but was so suddenly and remarkably rescued, that I was filled with astonishment. Involuntarily I felt strong emotions of gratitude to God for his merciful providence, so that my heart was constrained to praise the Lord. However, as often as I lifted my eyes to heaven, I heard the voice of conscience saying, ‘You are not worthy of salvation; the only offerings which please God are pure hearts.’ Oh, this humbled me deeply.”

In this penitent condition the Spirit of God quickened in the heart of Albright the truths which he had learned in his youth through catechetical instructions, so that the good seed finally began to germinate. About this he speaks as follows: “God extended his hand to me also in other ways. I had received instructions, in early youth, in the Christian religion. Then I could not comprehend, and did not experimentally realize the truth, still from that time there remained in me a reverence for God; though dim, yet it extended so far, that every place where God was worshiped became sacred to me, no matter in what way it was done.

No thought entered my mind, to despise or mock any person, irrespective of sect, engaged in divine worship. Reverence was the prompting cause that I often visited religious meetings and attentively listened to the admonitions of ministers. By means of the combined operations of the Gospel, I at last learned to know what was required of me in order to fulfill my duties as a man, and as a Christian, and to stand justified before Him who knows the faintest thought of the heart, and before whom the inmost recesses of it are disclosed. Very naturally the comparison between my conduct and those duties was now pressed upon my soul, and just as naturally I finally realized that I was so far estranged from God that I could not say: 'I am an unprofitable servant, I have done that which was my duty to do,' but was compelled to acknowledge that I was a miserable sinner, an enemy and an offender against a *righteous* God — a *righteous Judge*, who will reward every good deed, and also punish severely each sinful act; ah, yes, even every sinful thought!'"

"For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword."—Heb. 4. 12.

Albright's experience now fully accorded with this important passage of Scripture. The truths learned in early life, and the sermons he had heard, were now quickened through God's Spirit, and



proved to him a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart and deeds, so that now the deepest recesses of the heart were disclosed, and the sentence of condemnation was passed by conscience upon the entire sinful man. This produced wretchedness and distress, and the process of a painful self-condemnation followed, which Albright describes in the following manner: "My condition struck me with fear. God's judgments appeared before my imagination; I was very much depressed in spirit, so that none of the attractions of sensuality afforded me pleasure. The feeling of my unworthiness increased daily, until finally, in my thirty-third year, upon a certain day in the month of July, 1791, it reached a crisis which bordered on despair. I felt so weak, and my sins so many, that I could not comprehend how a Judge, who judgeth a righteous judgment, could possibly allow me to escape the abyss of damnation. The anxiety of my soul increased every moment, so that I was ready to exclaim: 'Ye mountains, fall upon me, and ye hills, cover me.' How deeply I regretted my past life, and how widely different I would have lived, could I have lived it over again! I not only realized my great sinfulness, but this knowledge of sin was followed by keen sorrow, whereupon I immediately formed the resolution in future to forsake my evil ways, and so to order my life, that I could at least quiet my con-

science, although I had no hope of pardon for the offences which I had committed against my Creator and Redeemer."

FERVENT PRAYER.

"Behold he prayeth!" (Acts 9. 11.) So said Christ to Ananias, in order to convince him that the spirit of rebellion in Saul was subdued, and that he was in the act of stepping on the Lord's side. So it was also said of Albright, who should likewise serve the Lord as a "chosen vessel." He was at this time in such anguish of soul, on account of his sins, that prayer had become to him an indispensable necessity. We again quote his own language: "As my heart realized this keen sense of sorrow, and as this resolution to reform passed before my soul, then I also felt the need of prayer, and of pouring out my heart before God. I felt that I had power to pray ardently, heartily, and with resignation. I fell upon my knees, and tears of bitter sorrow flowed down my cheeks, and a lengthy and fervent prayer ascended to the throne of God for grace and the remission of my sins." Such language furnishes incontrovertible proof that Albright's repentance was neither superficial nor the work of man. It was the work of the Holy Spirit, who applied the word of God and the Divine law in such a way to his conscience, that he was brought into the condition of the awakened sinner, which Paul describes in the sev-

enth chapter of Romans, and like unto him cried out: "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

This godly sorrow constrained Albright, as he himself says, to fall down upon his knees in prayer. (The lazy and God-dishonoring custom of sitting during prayer, which is so prevalent in public worship in our day, was unknown to the founder of the Evangelical Association. We hope that no member of our Church will have the effrontery to *sit* during prayer in "the seat of the scornful.")

The predominant characteristics of the life and labors of the founder of a religious denomination measurably impress themselves upon his cotemporaries and followers. This lies in the nature of man. Albright passed through a severe struggle in repentance, and was genuinely converted, and the Evangelical Association from the very beginning has insisted upon sound conversions and genuine religion, perhaps more so than other similar sister Churches. We know of instances where months, yea, even years, were spent in the agonies of repentance. Like John the Baptist the fathers demanded of penitents that they should "bring forth fruits meet for repentance," and that a change of heart must be shown by the fact of a separation from all sin and sinful ways and sinful society. It was required that the change be perceptible. "Seekers," who wore jewelry, or were fashionably



attired, were at once told that they must be willing to lay aside those worldly conformities which were forbidden in the Word of God. Repentance, unless accompanied by a thorough change of heart, and a radical reformation of life, was not recognized as genuine. True repentance was defined as a "godly sorrow which worketh a repentance unto salvation not to be repented of." Neither was any one falsely comforted, viz.: that he should "believe" or "hope" that he was a child of God, when he felt somewhat relieved after shedding tears. It was insisted upon that he must pass from death unto spiritual life, and receive the *witness of the Spirit of God* that he is a child of God. The following excellent German stanza was frequently used :

"Dies von Gott gewirkte Trauern  
 Reisst von aller Suende los,  
 Und wie lange muss es dauern ?  
 Bis zur Ruh' in Jesu Schooss."

May our Church never exchange this Biblical foundation, upon which her founder rested his experience and doctrine, for the superficial tendencies of the age !

#### THE DAWN AND RISING OF THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings."  
 —Mal. 4. 2.

Albright relates further: "This persevering and fervent prayer brought me nearer the light of Divine grace. I realized power to consecrate myself to God, and to submit my will entirely to the Lord."

During all this time he anxiously watched his every thought, every impression, and every action. The conflict was violent, and the travail of his soul painful. He sought counsel of men, but found little or no help, until the Lord permitted him to meet an unassuming man, who was to be to him what Ananias was to the convicted Saul, and that aged Brother in the convent of Erfurt to the deeply stricken Martin Luther. Of this the sainted Bishop Seybert recorded the following in a paragraph found among his papers: "Albright commenced to weep, fast and pray. After he had for some time sought help and counsel from God and man, he visited a man by the name of Adam Riegel, an earnest and zealous minister, not, however, connected with any religious denomination. This man at once took an interest in him, and prayed and labored with him until he realized the pardon of his sins, and eternal life, and hence, found peace, comfort and joy in the blood of Christ, and was so overwhelmingly filled with Divine joy, that he knew not how he should adequately praise and magnify the Lord." This occurred in the house of Adam Riegel.

This report of Bishop Seybert, who was born and raised in the vicinity of the sainted Albright's home, and for some time his cotemporary, should certainly silence the unauthenticated statements that Albright was converted in a Methodist meeting, held in the house of a Mr. Butterfield, or that he was brought to Christ through the labors of the United Brethren in Christ.

Albright himself describes his conversion in the following words: "In the place of carnality came a holy love to God, his Word, and all his true children. Gradually every anguish of heart was removed, and comfort and the blessed peace of God pervaded my soul. God's Spirit bore witness with my spirit, that I was a child of God; one joyful experience following another, and such a sweet peace now filled my soul as no pen can describe, or mortal tongue can express, in comparison with which the greatest earthly happiness I previously enjoyed, was only wretchedness and deceit. Now my prayer was not mere supplication, but praise and hearty thanksgiving were also brought as an offering, accompanied with tears of joy, to the Giver of every good gift."

Thus was fulfilled what Albright formerly said of the hope which occasionally afforded him some comfort in his distress, viz.: "That God does not desire the death of the wicked, but rather that he should turn and live; and that he graciously looks

upon a broken heart, and will also complete the work of grace for Jesus' sake."

#### THE GOOD FOUNDATION.

The work of justification and regeneration was now wrought in Albright by the power of the Holy Ghost, and this work the holy Spirit sealed with his own seal. Thus the foundation of sanctification and Christian perfection was laid, and also the fundamental key-note of his future preaching and labors was struck in the depth of his soul. At that time a thorough experience in Divine things was the exception, both in German and English Churches. Hence, in order to influence others successfully, it was necessary that Albright should first realize this great deficiency in himself, and also become experimentally acquainted with the source whence to supply this lack.

#### IN HIS "FIRST LOVE."

Albright was now happily rescued from the mire of sin, and his feet were set upon Christ, the Rock of salvation. A new song was put into his mouth, even praises unto his God. He now realized an intense desire that his neighbors and friends should also taste that the Lord is good, and learn to fear his name.

In those days the people, generally, were very plain and simple, both in their deportment and speech. French customs and fashionable etiquette were entirely unknown in the surroundings of

Albright; hence, on the same day in which he was saved, without consulting flesh and blood, he put forth efforts to win souls to Christ. Concerning this zeal for souls manifested by Albright, we find the following paragraph in the writings of Bishop Seybert: "As Albright went rejoicingly from Riegel's house toward his home, he met a Dunkard preacher, to whom he said, 'You must be born again, or you will be damned.' The preacher became very much alarmed and embarrassed, and afterwards complained to Riegel that Albright had thus addressed him. Riegel, however, replied, 'There is no other way.' These blunt remarks did good service to this minister, who had only the form of godliness, but whether they resulted in his conversion is not known."

Albright now served God with intense zeal and with great joy. We give his experience in his own language: "Doing the will of God was now not grievous, for I hated sin, and served the Lord with much joy, and frequently was greatly blessed while communing with God in prayer." Bishop Seybert records on this point: "After Albright's conversion, Riegel and he had blessed seasons together in preaching, prayer and devotional services in Riegel's house, and at other places."

At this time there was an important revival in progress in Lancaster County, but the penitents and converts were greatly persecuted, and expelled

from their respective Churches. These rejected ones then sought out each other, and endeavored mutually to edify one another, as well as it could be done under the circumstances.





## CHAPTER V.

## Ecclesiastical Relations.

## ALBRIGHT'S RELATION TO THE CHURCH.

“FOR I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise.”—Ps. 42. 4.

Inasmuch as Albright was naturally a punctual and methodical man, he did not like to stand aloof from Church connection and discipline. He saw danger in standing alone, and also realized that he was in need of the watchful care and encouragement of his brethren in Christ. He says: “After I had experienced the grace of regeneration, I soon recognized the fact that the surest and best way to work out my soul’s salvation, and to be ready at all times to fight the good fight of faith, was, to be in fellowship with devout Christians, and to take part in bearing the cross, to pray for and with one another, to be vigilant and edify each other by means of an exemplary life in the service of God.” Truly, this was an excellent view.

Albright had no desire to stand aloof from the Church, and to labor independently for the sake of personal aggrandizement, as has been falsely asserted of him. This thought never entered his mind; but, on the contrary, he preferred to serve

God, and to bear the cross in fellowship with other pious Christians. But because he was persecuted and decried as a fanatic by those who lived in sin, in his own (Lutheran) Church, he found it necessary to seek association with other Christians.

What the real condition of things was at that time, we will permit Bishop Seybert to relate: "Meanwhile the twilight of a better day began to dawn and break forth in glory amongst the German people. ① A Mennonite minister by the name of Jacob Boehm, was converted to God, on account of which he was rejected and expelled by his brethren in office. But he would not keep silent; he preached and ministered very successfully to immense congregations.

② "Another man named Neidig, also a Mennonite, was converted and likewise rejected by his brethren, but he too became a powerful and spiritual minister in Dauphin Co., Pa., and still another by the name of Newcomer, who in later years became Bishop among the United Brethren in Christ.

③ "In the City of Baltimore, in the State of Maryland, a man by the name of Otterbein was converted. He, too, was rejected by his brethren in office, but they could not remove him from his charge, because his flock clung to him in great love. He labored successfully in city and country, and many, of whom several became useful ministers were converted to God through the instru-



mentality of his preaching. Another man, named Troxel, also labored very efficiently.

“At this time (soon after Albright’s conversion) there was a revival in that community. During this revival Adam Riegel’s children were converted to God, besides others, young and old, throughout Lancaster County. This revival produced some wide-awake ministers, such as Abraham and Christian Hirschy, — Grosch, Christian Smith; and in Lebanon County, Felix Light. Out of these and others a kind of Association originated, which at first bore a variety of names; sometimes they were called Otterbein’s people, Boehmish people, Impartial people, General, and also Independent people, because they would not submit themselves to Church Discipline or regulations. Each one wished to stand alone, however to be united in spirit and mutual labor; but riper experience taught them that without an external organization and good discipline, no religious Association could endure and prosper. Hence, from this time forth, the people referred to above adopted the name “The United Brethren in Christ.”

ALBRIGHT’S RECEPTION INTO THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

Albright looked around to find a Church that served God and upheld good discipline, with which he could unite. The people mentioned by Bishop Seybert entirely ignored Church Discipline, of

which Albright could not approve. We quote his own language: "At this time I knew of no Association of professed Christians who seemed to be more zealous and active, and whose Discipline and regulations suited me better, than the Methodists. For this reason I united with them, and found among them opportunity to receive great blessings and benefit for my soul. As many things in their mode of worship were not yet clear to me, since it was conducted in the English language, with which I was not sufficiently familiar at this time, I earnestly endeavored to become acquainted with their doctrine and Discipline, with which I was much pleased. I conformed to its regulations both in my conduct and devotions."

The condition of religion among the Methodists at this time, Bishop Seybert reports as follows: "Among the English people many were truly converted to God, and belonged to the Methodist Church, leading a humble, Christian life, serving God in spirit, and their preachers preaching powerfully. These were a blessing to the nation, and brought many to a change of heart and mind. But wherever these people served God zealously and led holy lives, they were hated and persecuted by the world."

Thus Albright became a Methodist—not in order to become popular and get into office in this Church; for this there was no prospect for a Ger-

man man, neither did he do so to escape persecutions and trials, for the Methodists at this time were very much persecuted, but he was willing to bear his share of reproach for Christ; nor did he take this step because he regarded himself better than his German brethren, who, together with him were also converted to God, but because, soon after his conversion, "*he realized*" that it was Scriptural, and the "*surest way*, in order to work out his soul's salvation, to be under good discipline." This is strong evidence of his good common-sense, and the manly steadfastness of his character and religious views. What other wise and devotedly pious men learned only by years of experience, he comprehended at once very clearly, and acted accordingly, although he was, at the time, severely censured by many professing Christians.

Should not the Evangelical Association, which is blessed with an unexcelled Church Discipline, like unto her founder prize it highly, and administer it faithfully? This beautiful vineyard, which the fathers enclosed with so much labor and care, and which hitherto has borne precious fruit, will become a waste, and fall a prey to "wild beasts" *if its hedges are neglected!*

As a member of the Methodist Church, Albright's name was recorded in a class in his immediate neighborhood, which held its prayer and class-meetings in the house of Isaac Davies, whose farm

adjoined Albright's. This Isaac Davies (grandfather, on the mother's side, of Rev. D. Hambright, of the East Pennsylvania Conference) was class-leader.\*

\*) It is perhaps proper, at this juncture, to state that Albright was *never expelled* from the M. E. Church; there were no charges preferred against him at any time. Only because God led him into a different field of labor, after having become acquainted with the Doctrine, Discipline, and methods of work of the Methodists, did he forfeit his membership as a necessary consequence. If the Lord had not thus led him, he would no doubt have remained in the M. E. Church, for he felt perfectly at home among them. [Ed.]



## CHAPTER VI.

## Growth in Grace and Entire Sanctification.

## FAITHFUL IMPROVEMENT OF THE MEANS OF GRACE.

“WHEREFORE the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.”—2 Pet. 1. 10.

Albright had now found a home in which he was spiritually cared for. He was faithful in the use of the means of grace and the discharge of Christian duties. But he was also attacked by Satan, and compelled to pass through severe internal conflicts, which is more or less the case with all of God's children, especially in the beginning of the Divine life. He further says: “I strove to be temperate, and exercised myself much in fasting and prayer, which I always found to be the best means in the hour of trial, for I had very severe temptations and inward struggles, and when in a strait whether or not to heed the counsel of others, I continued more earnestly and constantly in prayer, which always helped me to overcome my enemies. However, I also found that the encouragement and advice of true, pious, and experienced servants of God were a strong support. In this manner I became more mature in the

knowledge of God; and by means of my struggles in trials, and the victory which the grace of God afforded me, my faith and determination to do good became firmer; and through persevering and fervent prayer I realized constantly greater trust." Albright was heartily in earnest in his devotions, and deported himself accordingly, and the result was a healthy growth in grace and progress in the work of the Lord.

#### ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION.

In being connected with the Methodists, Albright became acquainted with the doctrine of Sanctification and Christian Perfection, as it was taught by John Wesley and the fathers of Methodism, according to 2 Cor. 7. 1; 1 Thess. 5. 23, 24, etc. He sought this state of grace with all his heart, and also realized it in his personal experience. Of the details of his experience of entire sanctification he left nothing upon record, but that he had a definite experience of this grace he did not conceal, and he exhorted his spiritual children, both in private and in public, to seek this great blessing. The unanimous testimony of the fathers and mothers in Israel who personally knew and heard him, places this beyond doubt. Father Dreisbach, who for some time traveled with him, declared to the compiler of this book: "Albright did not merely make a profession, but he lived in the fullness of entire sanctification. He had complete victory over his passions.



Everything about him seemed to be under the control of the Spirit, and he lived in perfect love to God and man." Albright himself says: "I attained to a state in which my heart was almost continually lifted up to God, and realized the ability to be temperate in all things, *to love God supremely, and my neighbor as myself*; for God, and Christ through his Spirit, quickened my soul, so *that I did not live unto myself, but to the glory of God, and the welfare of humanity*." Any one acquainted with Wesley's writings and the forms of expression of Methodist theology knows, that the sentences which are printed in *italics* express entire sanctification. This degree of grace he experienced, it seems, shortly before he entered the itinerancy, and about four years after his conversion, which he indicates in the following language: "In possession of *such grace, which was a gift of God*, endued with the power of His righteousness and holiness, his Spirit sealing me in love, grace and hope, I entered upon my itinerant labors." What stress he laid upon the possession of this grace, and how much he urged ministers of the Gospel to seek, enjoy, and preach sanctification, is especially to be seen in the exhortations which he gave in later years to his co-laborer, George Miller. Miller had already for some time served as an itinerant minister, but being sorely tempted, was about to resign his office. Miller says: "Albright asked me whether I had

experienced the grace of sanctification? I replied, that I could not answer affirmatively. ‘*Then,*’ he responded, ‘*you cannot preach sanctification with power;*’ and exhorted me, without delay earnestly to seek this grace, otherwise I would not be able to endure these severe trials,” etc. We learn from this that Albright did not believe and teach that entire sanctification and regeneration were simultaneously experienced, for Miller had been converted to God for a number of years. Neither did he believe and teach the necessary continuation of the root of sin, or a sinful potency in believers, until near or unto death. He admonished Miller “to seek *without delay*” entire sanctification. He also did not believe that a minister without the experience of sanctification could preach this doctrine clearly and effectively, or successfully stand the test to the end.

Albright taught sanctification as a definite work of God, or as a blessing—“*this grace*” which we “*receive*”—or as a real and powerful work, which imparts the ability to resist all temptation, and thankfully to accept all adversities and crosses as coming from the hand of the Lord. What would Albright have thought and said of a preacher who questions the distinctness and definiteness of the work of sanctification—who declares it to be fanaticism, and endeavors to prove that a person either already is wholly sanctified in regeneration, or, on



the other hand, postpones the experience to the end of life, or death? Would he have accepted such a man as his co-laborer? Is such a minister "*Evangelical*"? Let Albright's experience, the testimony of those who heard him preach, and his admonitions to G. Miller answer these questions.



## CHAPTER VII.

## Call to the Ministry.

## INTRODUCTORY STEPS.

“**T**HOU shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee, thou shalt speak.”—Jer. 1. 7.

Soon after his conversion, Albright and Riegel held meetings for their mutual edification. “In the class and prayer-meetings of the Methodists,” Albright records, “my joy in God increased daily, and I received power to pray impressively in public, to the edification of myself and others.” This strengthened him, and made a favorable impression upon his brethren. “Thus,” he continues, “I realized more and more strength, and, occasionally, at the request of my fellow Christians, I delivered an exhortation, which did not remain fruitless.” In view of this, he received a written license as exhorter; and as at this time a revival was in progress among his German neighbors, frequent opportunities presented themselves to deliver a word of exhortation. Of this Albright speaks as follows: “Naturally I had no talent to speak in public, and I frankly confess that I was less qualified in this respect than any other one who might have undertaken it; but when I felt myself carried away by

the Spirit of God, when prayer brought my soul nearer to my Redeemer, when I was animated with a hatred against sin, when the righteousness of a scrutinizing Judge appeared before me, and I at the same time realized his overwhelming love towards his fallen creatures, I was seized upon by an influence which loosened my tongue, and God's grace wrought through me the conversion of fallen and unconverted professors of religion, and the edification of true believers." It is clearly substantiated by competent witnesses, that his natural talent as a speaker was much greater than his modesty would allow him to claim. His language testifies that he did not overrate, but rather underestimate himself, humility being a prominent trait in his Christian character.—At this time he had no idea of becoming a minister of the Gospel, but no doubt the Lord had already chosen him to be his messenger.

#### THE INTERNAL CALL.

"Thou shalt be my preacher," said God to Jeremiah, and so he speaks to-day through his Spirit and providence to those whom he calls to this great work. He has reserved unto himself the prerogative to send whom He will, for He says, "I will give preachers to Jerusalem." (See Isa. 41. 27.) He thoroughly knows the work that is to be accomplished, as also His servants who are to do it. It is of special interest to know that Albright

*was* called, as well as *how* he was called into the vineyard by his Master, to do a work, the magnitude of which he could not foresee, but which God understood in all its bearings. We will allow him to speak for himself on this subject: "Thus I spent several years in a state of grace, and served God with joy and gladness, and realized his blessing in the bestowment of increased knowledge of him. A burning love to God and all his children, and towards my fellow-men generally, pervaded my being. Through this love, which the peace of God shed abroad in my heart, I came to see the great decline of true religion among the Germans in America, and felt their sad condition very keenly. I saw in all men, even in the deeply depraved, the creative hand of the Almighty. I recognized them as my brethren, and heartily desired that they might be as happy as I was. In this state of mind I frequently cast myself upon my knees, and implored God with burning tears, that he might lead my German brethren into a knowledge of the truth, that he would send them true and exemplary teachers, who would preach the Gospel in its power, in order to awaken the dead and slumbering religious professors out of their sleep of sin, and bring them again to the true life of godliness, so that they, too, might become partakers of the blessed peace with God and the fellowship of the saints in light. In this way I prayed daily for the

welfare of my brethren. And while I thus held intercourse with God, *all at once it seemed to become light in my soul*; I heard, as it were, a voice within, saying: 'Was it mere chance that the wretched condition of your brethren affected your heart so much? Was it chance, that your heart, yea, even *your* heart, was so overwhelmed with sympathy for the salvation of your brethren? Is not the hand of Him visible here, whose wisdom guides the destiny of individuals, as well as that of nations? What, if his infinite love, which desires to lead each soul into Abraham's bosom, *had chosen you*, to lead your brethren into the path of life, and to prepare them to share in the mercy of God!' I now began to realize more peace and more assurance. I felt a holy confidence that my prayers were acceptable, and I heard, as it were, the voice of God: 'Go, work in my vineyard; proclaim to my people the Gospel in its primitive purity, with energy and power, trusting in my fatherly love, that all those who hear and believe shall have part in my grace.'"

Here let us take off our shoes, for this is *holy ground*! Every reader, and especially every minister of the Evangelical Association, should listen with reverence to these conversations, which were held in the holy of holies of Albright's soul between himself and his God. In these solemn moments our Church was conceived in the heart of

Albright, through the Divine call to the ministry. The abundant fruit of his labors, as it now appears, corroborates this assertion, and establishes Albright's call to the work which he wrought. We are anew reminded of the wise and truthful word of Gamaliel: "If this counsel, or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be *of God*, *ye cannot overthrow it.*" (Acts 2. 38, 39.)

As Albright was called of God, so must each one who undertakes to preach the Gospel have, above anything else, an inward Divine call. Natural gifts, and the opinions of men are insufficient without this call. The Church has ever suffered the greatest harm through such persons as ran before God sent them, or such as have been misled by the persistent advice of friends. Such usually become "false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves," who do much harm, both to the doctrines of Christianity and practical religion. The Evangelical Association held from the beginning that only a Divine call decides this important question. It will be well with her if, like her founder, she clings firmly to this truly Biblical truth, both in doctrine and practice.

The thought of such a call, for such a work, had never before entered Albright's mind, and he never sought the office of the ministry for selfish purposes. Hence, when he so clearly realized his Divine call,



his nature shrunk back, as this is frequently the case, to some extent at least, with all true servants of God.

“Although,” Albright continues, “these things were very clear to my mind, yet nature suggested many doubts. Though this call did not seem to me to be in conflict with God and his Word, yet I argued, I am an uneducated and very ordinary man; how many persons of great gifts and learning there are, who would be much better instruments than I am, persons who possess a better presence, and would make a better impression. During such reflections my courage failed me, and then I prayed earnestly, that God might give this commission to some one else, better qualified and worthier than poor I was.” How widely different were the feelings and purposes of Albright from the slanderous statement of a certain “D. D.,”\* who made an abortive attempt to deliver himself of a piece of sarcasm as follows: “Albright was an ignorant and puffed-up man, who wished to become great, and hence went to work like a silly boy, who attempted to elevate himself by pulling away at the legs of his trousers.”

Henceforth Albright’s inner experience became very interesting. His timid heart searched for excuses, but conscience spoke freely and loudly for

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\*) We will omit his name, because he no doubt thinks differently now. Ed.



God. "To such excuses," Albright continues, "the voice of my conscience constantly answered, that on my part there must be a *confiding* obedience without murmuring; God's grace would be sufficient; it would qualify those whom the Lord had chosen as instruments of his all-comprehensive love, with power from on high, and great blessings and success unto their efforts. Conscience also glowingly pictured the joy and the reward which were awaiting me, if I would be obedient to the Divine call, and on the other hand showed me the injury and ruin that would result to me, if I refused to obey the voice of God, and to submit to his will. In the distance I saw the crown glittering that awaited me if I would, as I was often clearly convinced that I should. follow the call of the Lord, to proclaim his kingdom through the Gospel, and to build up the Church upon Christ, the Rock and Cornerstone of all believers, in united fellowship, according to the command of Christ and his apostles." But instead of at once obeying the voice of God, Albright shrank from assuming the great responsibilities, counseling with flesh and blood, which brought great darkness and confusion upon him. "Thus," Albright further says, "ebb and tide passed through my soul. Notwithstanding the full condition of a Divine call, my flesh would still raise many objections, so that I often became undecided to obey, and thereby became deeply distressed

and humbled. A great weight seemed to rest upon me; I had no enjoyment by day, nor rest by night. I became so low-spirited that nothing was able to cheer me—my inward peace fled, and the idea that it would be almost impossible, without the assistance of others, without any ecclesiastical connection, to travel through the country and preach, only increased my anxiety. All the external dangers and difficulties, which, under such circumstances, would thrust themselves in my way, were vividly placed before my imagination, and I trembled in these hours of temptation, notwithstanding that I had God's promises on my side. This was especially the case when I considered that I should be compelled to stand alone, without any support upon which I could rely, knowing God would prove me through trials. However, notwithstanding these doubts, the consciousness was wrought within me by the grace of God, that God was mighty in the weak, that he would ask no more than we were able to perform, that the courage he imparted, and the grace he bestowed would be sufficient to achieve victory and success, if his honor and glory were the end kept in view. I was also conscious of His power, and that all sufficiency came from Him, and that He would qualify those who acted in accordance with His pleasure, as I often realized, when I fully submitted myself to His will."

Albright's struggles and delay were made, under Divine providence, which knows how to make "all things work together for good," more abundantly to show to future generations, that this man was not a wild enthusiast, nor acted hastily in any important matter; but, on the contrary, that he counted the cost well, and rather over-estimated the same. This, also, only had the effect of confirming his Divine call, and to determine him to be obedient, as we shall soon see :

"By contending with these doubts, I became more and more, and finally fully convinced, that God had called me to the great work of proclaiming his Word and Gospel to my erring brethren. Everything that had in the beginning opposed me, all objections, the fear of man, distrust in my own ability, fear of failure in my work, and concern for my steadfastness, became insignificant before the eye of my soul; and, on the other hand, God placed before my mind so many motives, through the impartation of fervent love for my brethren, the confidence in his mighty protection and help, the trust in his blessing, and a spiritual view into the future, revealing the great reward awaiting me for faithfully rendered services, that I could no longer refuse to obey his call.

#### DELAY AND CHASTISEMENT.

The cause of the Lord requires haste, for many immortal souls are in danger of being eternally lost.

When the Lord has once said: "Go, work in my vineyard," it is meant in earnest. He would not permit a certain man, first to go home to take leave of his friends, and another first to bury his father. A person having once *plainly understood* the call of the Lord, and *consented thereto*, it is perilous to delay. This was also the experience of Albright, concerning which we will further hear him:

"But the execution of this call I deferred from one time to another. I still imagined that I saw a difficulty, and when this was removed, then I persuaded myself of the existence of another. For this indecision the Lord finally chastened me with severe afflictions, a constant cutting pain penetrated every nerve, and almost intolerable torment coursed through the members of my body, my form became emaciated, so that nothing was left of me but a shadow. My muscular system became so weakened, that I could not do work of any kind. and, still worse than all bodily suffering, was the terrible feeling which at times overcame my soul, as though I was entirely forsaken of God. What I endured during this sickness in body and in mind is indescribable. Sometimes, in the feeling of being forsaken of God, I screamed so terribly that all who saw and heard me, turned away from me with horror."

Can any one whom the Lord has called to the office of the ministry, and who is disobedient to

that call, save his soul? If, when he is obedient, he “saves himself and those who hear him,” will he not plunge himself and others into damnation through his disobedience? Albright’s experience furnishes important data to a correct answer of these questions. If he had not become obedient—then woe unto him!

#### THE FINAL DECISION.

“During this chastisement I recognized more than ever before the hand of God, and became most thoroughly convinced that a person cannot do better than to submit himself entirely to the will of his Creator, and to render unhesitating obedience to his call. Miserable as my condition was, God still showed unmerited mercy towards me, by retaining me in a state of grace. I therefore continued instant in prayer, humbled myself before the Lord, prayed with hot tears for forgiveness, and solemnly vowed, and firmly resolved that, if restored to health, I would be obedient to God’s call, and *immediately* travel through the country and preach the Gospel wherever it would please him to send me, if only his presence would go with me. As soon as this resolution was fixed in my heart, it seemed as if a heavy burden had rolled from my soul. I felt greatly relieved, peace having again taken possession of my breast. After rest had come to my soul, I was also soon relieved from bodily pain, my strength speedily returned, new



life pervaded the members of my body, and in a short time I was completely restored."

#### READY TO TRAVEL.

"Here am I, send me," was finally said by Jacob Albright, without any further *ifs* or *buts*. "As soon as I was restored," he further relates, "I immediately commenced to make such preparations as I considered necessary and proper. The sufficiency to preach the Gospel I sought solely from the Lord, by unceasing prayer and daily searching the Scriptures. I also endeavored to consecrate my body entirely to the service of God, so that no passion, desire or love of ease should obstruct or hinder me in my course; for God showed me plainly the miserable and wretched condition of those who preach the practice of virtue to others, and they themselves are castaways."

#### REMARKABLE FASTING.

"Therefore I fasted for weeks, in the beginning, so that my body was often so overheated and inflamed that I was compelled to bathe in cold water, in order to allay the inflammation. I did everything in my power to crucify my affections and lusts, so that the flesh might not reign in me, but the Spirit of Christ. God blessed my efforts so powerfully, that my heart was constantly lifted up to him, and received strength to keep myself temperate in all things, to love God supremely, and my neighbor as myself, for Christ quickened my

soul with his Spirit, that I did not live unto myself, but to the glory of God and for the welfare of man."

I presume no one will question the motives of this self-denying man in this remarkable fasting. It was not done to merit the grace of God, for he has told us that he sought the sufficiency for his work solely from the Lord, in constant prayer and searching in the Scriptures. But, like Paul, he wished to keep his body *under subjection*, so that, preaching unto others, he might not himself become a castaway. But since Albright had no one to counsel with on this subject, he went so far in his zeal, that he nearly prostrated his body, not allowing it sufficient nourishment to enable it to perform its functions as "the temple of the Holy Ghost," and as the instrument of the soul in the service of God. The Scriptures, of course, declare that Paul brought his body under, yet the New Testament also enjoins that we should take care of the body, for it is the temple of the Holy Ghost, yet not so as to "make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof." Moderate fasting cannot be too highly recommended, while intemperance in all things should be avoided. But we should remember that Albright was called to a specially difficult work, the great importance of which he fully comprehended and deeply realized. Just then he wished to devote himself to it for life, and his



spirit was full of presentiment; the portentous future for him and the cause of God burdened his mind. Under such circumstances his soul must have been in special suspense. Hence, the mistake he committed against his body was caused by feelings which are quite excusable. His fasting for weeks is covered by the declaration of Paul: "For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God." (2 Cor. 5. 13.) It was not a mistake of the heart, and hence God did not hold him accountable for it. Such an error can be committed by a person in the possession of perfect love without any detriment either to the doctrine or experience of Christian Perfection, as it is not caused either by the affections or by the will. The merits of Christ cover all such shortcomings, and his Spirit, in course of time, will show to the sincere Christian how in the future similar mistakes may be avoided. Otherwise, Albright's self-denying spirit is to be very much commended.



## CHAPTER VIII.

## Reformatory Labors and Persecutions.

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WHY?

“TO open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.”—Acts 26. 16.

We have now arrived at a period of Albright's history, where the question, “Why was the reformatory work of Albright necessary,” must be directly answered. If there was no necessity for it, then Albright was also not called to such a work. If the work is not at hand, then the call thereto must be wanting, and all impressions and feelings relative to it are either a delusion of Satan or self-deception.

## WHY, THEN?

We answer: Because the power of godliness in the German Churches had, at that time, almost become extinct; it was even decried by many preachers as fanaticism, and hence sin and corruption had gained the ascendancy to such an extent, that members and officers in the church lived in open sin, and only here and there a form of godliness remained. Church discipline was entirely

neglected, and the "wild beasts rooted up the vineyard of the Lord" in a fearful manner. Here and there a few men were to be found, for instance, the Rev. J. G. Schmucker, and Dr. B. Kurtz in the Lutheran Church, who saw and deplored this moral ruin. Schmucker once heard Albright preach in a cemetery in the town of Lebanon, Pa., during the session of the Lutheran Synod at that place, and afterwards testified that the sermon was plain and powerful, and that such preaching was very much needed. According to Schmucker's opinion, there were at that time *only a few* converted preachers in the large Synod to which he belonged. Dr. Kurtz wrote in the "*Lutheran Observer*," relative to that time, as follows: "Sabbath-schools, prayer-meetings, etc., were not yet introduced. Night meetings were looked upon as 'new measures.' *Conversion* was a strange word, and revivals were unknown. True, the Lord still had his chosen ones, but they were as few in number as the gleanings of the olive tree, two or three in the top. Cock fights, race courses, the bowling alley, dog and bear fights, etc., were more largely attended than the house of God. In general, darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people." (*Lutheran Observer*, No. 1107.).

This description was truthfully applicable to almost every locality. Bishop Seybert, who grew up to manhood in the midst of this deplorable state

of the Church, before he was converted to God, through Albright and his co-laborers, leaves the following testimony of the condition of the Church at that time: "In the year 1800 the German population of Pennsylvania consisted chiefly of Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Reformed, Mennonites, Old school and New school Baptists, Schwenkfelders, etc. The majority of Catholics, Lutherans (and largely the Reformed) were guilty of gross violations of God's law, profanity, Sabbath desecration, drunkenness, etc., being quite common among them. Baptism, confirmation, with an occasional reception of the Lord's supper, constituted the essentials of their religion. The preachers themselves, with but few exceptions, were wicked, and hostile towards converted people. The Mennonites and Baptists in general had a more pious exterior, but in reality they were, nevertheless, enemies to true experimental religion, which showed itself among them and the Schwenkfelders, when persons were converted to God." Seybert also describes the sad state of the Church in his home at Manheim, Pa., not far from Albright's neighborhood, in the following words: "The Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and German Reformed Churches had their children baptized in infancy. When they reached the age, say from 12 to 20 years, they attended catechetical instructions, and afterwards were confirmed, on which occasion the minister demanded of them be-

fore God and all the people, to renounce Satan and sin, and to serve God faithfully until death; then they were blessed with the laying on of hands and pronounced Christians. This usually occurred on Easter Sunday, but on Easter Monday those Christians could be seen in the ball-room, at the drinking and gambling tables, as well as on Christmas, New Year, and Pentecost. The majority of these hypocritical Christians, manufactured thus, were a rough and wicked set — swearers, Sabbath desecrators and inebriates. Even some Church officers were drunkards, liars, and guilty of dishonesty, so that the proverb became current, “No one is fit to be a Church officer, without having an illegitimate child!” To these facts, related by Seybert, we will add what we well remember of the “dark corners” (as they were often called) of Montgomery, Berks, Bucks, and other eastern counties of Pennsylvania, in which the same moral darkness prevailed in the Church, and which continued even until 1830. Facts could be cited that would appear shocking and incredible to the reader, and we will be as sparing as possible, and only exhibit so much of the deplorable declension of the Church during Albright’s time, as is indispensably necessary, to show the necessity of his labors. We will only call attention to one more testimony, that of Rev. J. L. Reber, a Reformed minister. In his book entitled: “*Ein ernsthaftes Wort ueber den Sec-*



*tengeist und das Sectenwesen*," alluding to Albright and his co-laborers, he says: "At the time these men were awakened, the Church was in a deplorable state. The ways of Zion were dreary, the Church was almost lifeless, the majority wickedly slumbering in sin."

To arouse the Church, dead in trespasses and sin, and to seek the lost and neglected sheep and bring them to Christ, the Lord needed a man like Albright. For such a work a classically educated man was not needed. Of these there were enough, but alas! they themselves were corrupt. Nor was any such literary labor required as the translation of the Bible, or the compilation of theological works, etc., in order to bring about the needed reformation. This labor had been previously done by other servants of God. But the German Churches, and the German people of this country, needed an earnest call to repentance towards God, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and for this purpose God selected this unassuming, but practical man, whom he especially qualified for this work. He had led Albright into a deep and thorough experimental knowledge of these truths, and then *thrust* him into the field to preach to the people *out of his own heart into their hearts*.

#### HIS FIRST EFFORTS.

Albright now saddled his horse and traveled into the morally desolate vineyard. His sufficiency

was not from man, but from God, he could therefore say with Paul: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God, who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit." (2 Cor. 3. 5, 6.)

But let Albright himself speak: "In possession of such grace, which was a gift from God, equipped with the power of his righteousness and holiness, sealed by his Spirit in love, faith and hope, I began my travels in the year 1796, in the month of Oct., in order to obey the call of God in proclaiming his holy will as revealed in the Gospel. I traveled extensively in Pennsylvania and Virginia, and through the blessing of God I found opportunity to preach in churches, school-houses and private houses. Occasionally I also received some support, so that I was enabled to continue my travels; for my labors in the Gospel were not without fruit, as many persons were awakened and converted to God."

#### HE PREACHES IN THE MARKET PLACE.

On a very beautiful Sabbath in the month of October, 1796, a Reformed Church at Shaeferstown, Lebanon Co., Pa., was dedicated. Jacob Albright, who had just entered upon his calling as an itinerant preacher, came there also. Inasmuch as a great multitude of people had met, so that the Church could not nearly seat them all, Albright went



to the market house which stood near the church, in the middle of the main street, and took his stand upon a pile of lumber, and began to preach to the people who gathered around him in great numbers. Many who heard the Word that day were "pricked in their hearts," and a great commotion ensued. However, some of the sons of Belial cried out: "This man is beside himself," and finally pushed him from the lumber pile, and would, no doubt, have maltreated him, had not a very strong man taken him in his arms like a child, and carried him away, saying, "You better leave now, or else you may yet be injured." But a gentleman named Mohr took him to his home. This sermon, and the ill-treatment of Albright, made a deep impression upon the minds of the people, and laid the foundation of the great revival which afterwards took place in that neighborhood.

#### ALBRIGHT AMONG THE SCHWENKFELDERS.

Soon after the above occurrences, we meet Albright in Montgomery County, about eighty miles, in a south-easterly direction, from the above place, and about ten miles from his birth-place, among the so-called "Schwenkfelders." These people belong to a small religious denomination who received their name from Caspar Schwenkfeld, a pious nobleman, and a cotemporary of Martin Luther, from Ossing, in Silesia, Germany. Schwenkfeld differed from Luther in his doctrine

concerning the Lord's Supper, and the means of grace. His literary productions, still extant, are thoroughly evangelical, and very spiritual, and have been the means of bringing many to a knowledge of the truth. His followers were so severely persecuted by Lutherans and Catholics, that they fled to America in 1734, and settled in Pennsylvania, where they led a pious Christian life. But these people soon degenerated spiritually, and later became severe persecutors of praying people. Still in Albright's time there were yet a number of souls to be found who were very susceptible to the truth. Many years ago Samuel Schultz, a man then eighty-five years old, narrated to the writer how as a youth he witnessed the arrival of Albright among the Schwenkfelders. He said: "At the funeral of a child of a Schwenkfelder family, who lived in Upper Hanover township, Montgomery County, Pa., it happened that Albright, as an entire stranger, appeared at the house of the bereaved family, after the people had already assembled. The stranger asked the officiating clergyman, George Kriebel, for permission to deliver an exhortation to the people. Upon his statement that he was an Evangelical preacher, and as his external appearance and his dress were very plain, which had considerable influence with those people, permission was granted him. Accompanying the procession to the church, which was

constructed of logs, he took his seat behind the table (there being no pulpit), by the side of the minister.

“Curiosity was awakened among the people, and whisperings were heard as to who this stranger might be, but no one could tell. To the astonishment of all, Albright arose after the sermon, and delivered a powerful exhortation. Afterwards he asked permission to preach there, which request was also gladly granted, and an appointment was announced for him for a certain Saturday. When Albright came he found a large congregation, to which he preached with much energy and feeling on the final judgment, from Matthew 25. The sermon made a deep impression, so that many tears were shed. A second appointment was made, and afterwards a third, in a different meeting-house.”

Meanwhile, however, a flood of persecution was let loose upon this pious man. The most shameful fabrications and falsehoods were spread abroad. He was represented to the Schwenkfelders to be a degraded character, and by these means they were induced to forbid him the use of their meeting-houses. But there was one man, by the name of David Schultz, commonly known as “Berg David,” who took no notice of these calumnies, and allowed Albright to preach in his house whenever he passed through the neighborhood. At this place

Albright scattered seed, bedewed with many tears and prayers, which in later years, from 1730 even up to the present time, has borne fruit an hundred fold, in the conversion of many souls, long after Albright has entered into the joy of his Lord.

It is remarkable how desperately Satan opposed this man, and how he kindled the fires of persecution against him. Not only were shameful falsehoods set afloat, as already stated, but the most absurd things were said about him. Sometimes during preaching, becoming very fervent, he would occasionally stand on his tiptoes. His enemies made much ado about this. Even as late as 1830, when Melchior Sch—— was seeking the Lord, and began to attend the services of Evangelical preachers, his brother J. Sch—— rushed upon him like a threatening Saul, saying: “And you want to go to *these Albright people*? Don’t you remember how thirty years ago, at ‘Berg David’s,’ Albright stood so proudly *upon his tiptoes*?” This he thought should be sufficient to make sun and moon, and his brother M. stand still; but the threatening word fell powerless to the ground, and only its insipid foolishness remained.

We can corroborate Father S. Schultz’s closing remarks given above, that the seed scattered by Albright bore fruit an hundred fold. As our home was in that neighborhood, we ourselves witnessed it from 1830 to 1853. The Lord did great

things among the Schwenkfelders and their neighbors, and in our boyhood we often heard the fathers speak about Albright, and that they could not forget the impression he had made upon them.

FURTHER LABORS. — SATAN'S RAGE.

After this, Albright found openings in many parts of Lancaster County, Pa., to preach the Gospel. About his labors there we are able to give some facts, but no special particulars. It has been ascertained, that he visited these parts about the beginning of his labors, after he had visited the Schwenkfelders in Montgomery County, and some other places in the eastern border counties of Pennsylvania. Here, too, Satan raged against him. Albright pointed out the sins and corruption which reigned among the people and in the Church, and souls were led to repentance and to Christ. The prince of darkness observed that under Christ's command a *conqueror* had invaded his realm, and the kingdom of darkness began to rage terribly. Albright was soon decried as a sensualist, and this slander wicked ministers, themselves guilty, eagerly circulated, and then warned the people "to beware of this false prophet, who came to them in sheep's clothing, but inwardly he was a ravenous wolf." Frequently the wicked deeds perpetrated by worthless characters, who served as pastors, but who deserved being sent to the penitentiary, were fastened upon him, which grieved him very much.



We will give an instance from Bishop Seybert's report: "Albright preached in the house of a certain widow, named Thomas, and at Christian Thomas' at Millersburg, four miles south of Lancaster. Soon some persons were converted there, a class was organized, Christian Thomas was appointed class-leader, and shortly afterwards his brother, David Thomas, and Thomas Ripley were converted. These three brethren afterwards became good and pious ministers. But a great persecution arose, and the devil raged fiercely, the wicked scoffing when passing by the house of Christian Thomas, but God likewise worked mightily."

On a Sabbath afternoon Albright preached in a street in Lebanon, Pa., from Isa. 58. 1: "Cry aloud and spare not," etc. In this sermon he told the Lutherans, German Reformed, Baptists and Menonites the truth in the following manner: "You Lutherans, of course, think you have Luther, and that he was a converted man; that you have the Catechism, etc., but your sinful lives prove that you are not Lutherans, for you live contrary to God's Word and Luther's teaching. And you, German Reformed—what does it mean to be *reformed*? It means to be restored, to be converted from sin and the world to God; but your lives prove that you have turned from God and towards the world. You Dunkards and



Mennonites, with your peculiar dress and outward plainness, by which you comfort yourselves, you will be lost without the new birth, notwithstanding you have large farms and earthly possessions. Be not astonished that I said unto you, 'You must be born again,' for these are the words of our Saviour and Judge." One of the auditors afterwards said to Father Spayth \* that this sermon made such an impression upon him, that it seemed to him as though he saw the earth open, to swallow them all up in their wickedness."

#### A SERMON ON FUTURE JUDGMENT.

Sometime after this (the date could not be ascertained) Albright preached at a certain place in Lancaster Co., Pa., from Mal. 3. 2—"But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap." He described the judgment with such power, that a strong young man, by the name of Leonard Zimmermann, was so wrought upon, that he thought he saw the Judge coming in the clouds of heaven, and soon it happened to him as it did to Saul—he became *blind* for a short time! He then commenced to seek the Lord, was truly converted to God, and afterwards became a useful minister.

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\*) A prominent man among the United Brethren in Christ.

## FURTHER LABORS AND SUCCESS.

It was not a rare occurrence that sinners were so powerfully wrought upon during Albright's sermons, that they would fall from their seats as if they were dead, in great agony on account of their sins, crying aloud for mercy. Wherever he went, awakenings and conversions followed; but persecutions also arose, and all kinds of slander circulated. He unsparingly rebuked and condemned sin, whether found among the clergy or laity, attacking no one personally, but fearlessly exposing false doctrine and crime. Of the regular Church-ministry he always spoke respectfully, as far as the truth justified him in doing, always appreciating and recognizing the good that still remained. From the beginning of his public labors until the year 1800, Albright labored largely in Lancaster, Dauphin and Berks Counties, Pennsylvania, but he also visited Virginia, whither many Germans of Pennsylvania had moved. He, however, directed his attention especially to the more easterly counties of Pennsylvania. Bishop Seybert writes about this as follows: "As soon as Albright had gained firm foothold in Lancaster and Dauphin Counties, moved by the Holy Spirit, he also traveled through Bucks and Northampton Counties in Eastern, and Northumberland and Center Counties in Central Pennsylvania."

He preached wherever he found an opening, in

churches, school-houses, barns, private houses, groves, highways and streets, in the country and in cities. This he did under great opposition from the wicked, with remarkable gentleness and patience, with great spiritual power, through which many were awakened and happily converted to God. In Northampton County he was very much hated and persecuted, most of his persecutors, however, were overtaken by signal judgments of God.

ALBRIGHT AND GEORGE MILLER MEET.

George Miller, who afterwards became a powerful co-laborer of Albright, was in a penitent condition in the year 1799. He prayed much in secret, wept over his sins, and searched the Scriptures. "In this penitent condition," says Miller, "Providence so ordered that I was permitted to see the Evangelical preacher, Jacob Albright. I also heard him preach, and though I previously thought little of him, yet now he seemed a wonder to me: for his humble appearance, his pious and cheerful countenance, which seemed to glow with love to God and man, the mild, but penetrating look, with which he gazed upon me, captivated me.

He preached from the words: "Behold, I place before you the way of life and the way of death."—Jer. 21. 8. I was so wrought upon by his powerful sermon, that if I had not seized hold of a table, I would have fallen to the floor. After the

sermon I conversed with him. His exhortation was short, but powerful. He said: "You must pray earnestly, humble yourself, take the cross of Christ upon you and believe with the heart, and then you will soon find peace. The next day I accompanied him to his appointment. When we separated I requested him to pray for me."

Many oral and written testimonies like the above could be adduced to show that Albright possessed a strikingly gracious and impressive expression of countenance, which made a lasting impression upon his hearers. Of Stephen it is said: "And they all looked upon him, who sat at council, and beheld his countenance, as the countenance of an angel." Of Albright, an old mother in Israel, who saw him often, said: "Oh, he was as beautiful as an angel!"



## CHAPTER IX.

**Organization of the Evangelical Association.**

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ALBRIGHT'S DESIGN.

“**I**T was by no means Albright's purpose to found a new religious denomination, but rather only to do the will of God and save souls. He had been taught by experience that he was compelled to do so in order to save his own soul. Hence, he had formed no plan for his work. The Master, however, provided for this, simply, plainly, telling his servant: ‘Go thou and do thy work,’ so that Albright had been compelled to adopt the language: ‘Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel.’ He had been taught by experience that it is always best to submit unconditionally to the will of God, and to be obedient to his call, without looking forward or backward. Albright was compelled to do his work outside of the Methodist church, as the leading men of that denomination, at that time, did not consider it necessary to labor in the German language, as they held to the opinion, “that the German language would die out, and that in twenty years all would be English.” (Bishop Seybert.) Even as late as 1810, in a conversation between Bishop Asbury and Rev. J. Dreisbach, during which it was suggested, that the German

circuits and preachers be received into the Methodist Episcopal Church, and continued as such, Bishop Asbury's reply was: "That would be inexpedient." The only course, therefore, which Albright could pursue under the circumstances, was to continue his labors in the German language independently.

The Lord had already blessed his labors. A number of souls had been awakened and led to God through his instrumentality, who now looked up to him as their spiritual father for advice and direction. (Albright never attempted to draw the converts of others to himself; those united with him were *his own* spiritual children.)

In the Methodist Episcopal Church there was, on account of the language, no home for them; the so-called "Impartial people," "General people," "Freedom people," etc., at that time rejected external organization and discipline as a "slavish yoke," and at many places opposed Albright, because he favored Church discipline. The other so-called Churches persecuted him and his little flock almost unto death; hence the circumstances, or rather *Divine Providence*, which shapes circumstances, left only this one way open, viz., to form an independent organization for mutual edification in godliness, and for the purpose of securing stability and perpetuity for the work. Hence, the Evangelical Association may fitly be termed "a



child of Providence;" her remarkable growth demonstrates this assertion, and also indicates that God has a great work for her to do in the future. The Lord does not raise up a people in such a striking manner, and then, when they have become strong, reject them, and suffer them to be destroyed, unless they become disobedient and fail to fulfill their mission, when the judgments of God will come upon them unto destruction.

#### ORGANIZATION OF CLASSES.

In the year 1800 Albright ventured the important step to organize the persons who, through the providence of God, had been entrusted to his care, into classes or societies. The first three of these classes were formed in the Counties of Bucks, Berks, and Northampton, in the State of Pennsylvania. The first, known as Walter's Class, was near Quakertown; the second, known as Liesser's Class, at the Colebrookdale Iron Works; and the third, known as Philip's Class, near the Blue Mountain. Afterwards other classes, besides these, were organized, to whom Albright ministered.

In reference to this matter Albright writes: "Having preached about four years, and having made special efforts to preach the Gospel where vital godliness and Christian discipline were unknown, I endeavored, through the grace of God which had been given me, to give these awakened and converted persons such instructions as they

needed, in order to work out their souls' salvation, and edify each other in the bonds of Christian fellowship, and in the unity of faith, in accordance with the teachings of Christ and his apostles. God also granted his blessing upon the undertaking. Many who had previously lived in darkness and ignorance, received the light of truth through the instrumentality and assistance of this union; and God, my Helper and Protector, also strengthened my own heart and mind with his grace, so that I was not only enabled to preach pure doctrine to those whom he had entrusted unto me, but also endeavored to establish them by my own example." Thus the Evangelical Association originated, although at that time this name, in fact any, had not yet been adopted. The conversion, sanctification, and eternal salvation of men was the first and chief aim, leaving all external matters to be determined by circumstances, and the directions of Providence.

The organization of the work into an ecclesiastical form had now been commenced, and was afterwards continued and completed.

## CHAPTER X.

## Continuation of Albright's Labors, and further Occurrences.

## ALBRIGHT PREACHES POWERFULLY ON WHIT-MONDAY.

“THERE is no definite account of Albright's labors during 1801, until we suddenly find him in the village of Hamburg, Berks County, Pa. Father Joseph Zoll, who as a youth attended the meeting, relates the following: “On Whit-Monday Albright arrived in Hamburg, and came to a man by the name of Diehl, who had a store. Albright had already previously talked with this man concerning an appointment, and asked him whether he would be allowed to preach there. Diehl thought it was not convenient at that time, as there was a “frolic” going on in the hotel opposite. Albright answered that that would be no obstacle to him, perhaps he could make some of those wicked persons afraid, and break up the “frolic.”

There was a mill close by, in front of which lay a wornout millstone, which was used to assist in mounting horses. The owner of the mill gave Albright permission to take his stand upon this stone and address the people. He preached with such power, and so strongly condemned sin and vice, that many became alarmed and left, so that the “frolic” was broken up. The landlord became

so enraged at Albright that he attempted to drive him away with a whip, but did not succeed. George Miller, who worked in the mill as a millwright, was afterwards converted, and became an itinerant preacher.

A young man by the name of Roeder became so frightened through the sermon, that he urged his associates to return home with him, and many did return, "pricked in their hearts by the Word of God."

#### THE FIRST BIG MEETING. \*

In 1802 Albright held his first "big meeting," in the house of Samuel Liesser, Sen., which was greatly blessed. Sinners were saved and believers edified. From this place he usually went to Walter's and C. Bissey's, about 18 miles south-east of Quakertown. John Walter, a young man, but strong in faith, and mighty in the Scriptures, entered the itinerancy with Albright during this year.

#### THE SECOND "BIG MEETING."

Soon after harvest (in 1802), Albright and Walter held a "big meeting" at John Thomas', in Decatur Township, Mifflin County, Pa. It contin-

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\*) A "big meeting" was a phrase belonging to those times, denoting a kind of general meeting of members and preachers, which usually lasted during Saturday and Sunday. At a later period this meeting was changed into the regular Quarterly Conference meeting.

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ued from Saturday noon until Monday noon, and was held under some large cherry trees near the house. It is estimated that about one thousand persons attended this gathering. On Sabbath morning Albright preached from John 8. 12: "I am the light of the world, whosoever followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." He described Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, "which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world." As the sun in the Spring of the year ascends higher and operates more effectually upon the earth through his rays, that the ice melts, the frost disappears, and the earth is warmed, and the vegetable kingdom is revived, and hence causes Spring, Summer and harvest—so Christ works spiritually upon every heart that submits itself to his light and influence. The rays of this Sun are the truths of God's Word, accompanied by the operations of the Holy Spirit. He likewise pointed out how this light, through the preaching of the Gospel, would penetrate into spiritually dark neighborhoods, and how it would be opposed by the darkness; that, as physical darkness was always the thickest just before the break of day, but would be overcome by the light, so this Light would shine into the moral darkness, and that whosoever would follow after the light would not walk in darkness, that is, not live in sin and doubt, but would have the light of life, and the



witness of the Holy Spirit that he was a child of God.

This sermon was very clear and powerful, and made a deep impression upon the congregation. Most of those present were so much affected by this address, that they shed tears, and were deeply convicted of the truth. During the delivery of the sermon Albright was so filled with power from on high, that it seemed as though a halo of glory encircled his countenance, and his otherwise impressive person appeared especially graceful. Thus his very appearance exerted a great influence upon the people, for they "saw his countenance as the countenance of an angel." But Satan, too, had his minions present, who at the outskirts of the congregation tried to cause disturbance. One of them even said: "If I only had powder that would make no report, I would soon shoot that Albright down."

#### ALBRIGHT A TEMPERANCE MAN.

After this meeting at Thomas', Albright visited the people in the neighborhood, to speak to them about their souls, as was his custom wherever he went. Among others he also visited the Wonder family, who lived near Thomas'. Father Wonder, of Carey, Ohio (now an aged man, up in the eighties), well remembers this visit of Albright at his father's house. He spoke with this family about religion, and of God's ways in a gentle and



touching manner. Before his departure, the family was called together at his request, and he prayed with them. At that time it was the general custom to offer whiskey to visitors; so it was done in this instance, and Mr. Wonder, with no evil intention, urged Albright to drink. But he decidedly yet gently declined, using the following language: "Dear people, I drink no liquor; I don't need it, and can do without it right well. You must not be offended on account of my refusal to drink." Wonder's family were very much astonished at this, and they could not help noticing the difference between Albright and Pastor St.—, who frequently got so drunk, that he had to be carried to bed. Mrs. Wonder was unwilling to give up her intemperate pastor, but her husband declared that Albright was right. The children even noticed the difference, and teased their mother, saying: "But there is a difference between father's pastor, Albright, and mother's pastor, St.—. Father's pastor sings and prays, and talks about religion, and drinks no liquor when he visits us, but mother's pastor does not pray, but curses and gets drunk—we will stick to father's pastor!"

At this place also the labors of Albright were not without fruit. During the years 1803–4 a number of persons were converted to God, among them being Wonder's family.

## ALBRIGHT VISITS GEORGE MILLER.

Miller in the meantime got married, and was making money fast, so that he was in danger of becoming worldly minded. "In this condition," he says, "the Lord sent his servant Albright to me, who asked for lodging. Rejoicing in being permitted to see him again, I entertained him most heartily. But to all my questions he gave only brief replies. However, he prayed so earnestly with us, that I could not refrain from weeping, which gave him occasion to urge upon me the necessity of conversion. The next day I accompanied him ten miles to Leonard Zimmerman's, where he had an appointment. On the way I told him my sad condition, and how I had been a penitent for several years, but had as yet not received the forgiveness of my sins, and the assurance of my acceptance with God.

"He told me then that I would have to submit myself to the will of God, believe in him, and trust in his help, and be willing to take up the cross and suffer reproach with the people of God, even if it seemed as though every person was against me; for unless I would forsake every sin, and separate myself from the world, and become obedient to God with all my heart, and be willing to serve him only, I might be penitent for many years, and yet finally be rejected by God and be lost. In due time we arrived at the place. He preached power-

fully, and with such liberty and boldness, that I was fully convinced no person could do so, without the aid of God's grace. Powerfully wrought upon by the sermon, I firmly resolved henceforth to work out my soul's salvation, and entreated Albright to preach the Gospel of Christ crucified in my house also, which he readily promised, and appointed a time when he would come."—Not long afterwards Miller found peace in believing.

From the above it will appear that it was not the purpose of Albright simply to gather a large number of followers, but, like his Master, he insisted on thorough separation from sin, self-denial and submission to the will of God. He did not build with "wood, hay and stubble," but with "gold, silver and precious stones," and his work most strikingly stood the test of the fire of persecution, and is stamped with the seal of God's approval. May every Evangelical preacher build as Albright built.

#### ANOTHER COLLEAGUE.

In 1803 Albright received Abraham Liesser, one of his first fruits, as assistant in the ministry. But as the work spread, persecution also increased. It would be impossible to describe the fearful calumnies and slanders which were heaped upon the little flock, who had united themselves to be saved from sin; and if a true description could be given, the report would scarcely be credited. Even better disposed persons criticised their action in establish-

ing a new Church organization, ascribing to Albright and his co-laborers all sorts of sinister and impure motives. Especially was he accused of pride, inasmuch as his personal appearance was always very neat and becoming, and his manner manly and positive; although always gentle, he was considered by some persons—who mistook slovenliness for humility, and were unable to distinguish between a star and a charcoal—as a haughty man, although he always dressed very plainly, and at all times manifested a humble spirit.

His little flock, who knew him well, were attached to him with reverential respect and ardent love. The severe persecutions and misrepresentations only brought them more closely together, and made them cling all the more firmly to the promises of God. Amid all the fierce opposition, either from the devil or from men, they trusted in God, and vigorously pushed forward the work. But since there was as yet no proper form of ecclesiastical government, and no articles of faith and rules and regulations had been adopted to carry on the work successfully, it was considered necessary to hold a council for that purpose. This council was held on the 3d of November, A. D. 1803. Besides Albright and his two colleagues, J. Walter and A. Liesser, the following fourteen brethren of the society were present: George Phillips, George Miller, Chas. Bissy, Conrad Phil-

lips, John Brobst, Solomon W. Friderici, Christian Brobst, George Phillips, Michael Brobst, Samuel Liesser, Peter Walter, Adam Miller, Jacob Riedy and Solomon Miller. These adherents of Albright, who recognized him as their spiritual father, to whom they were indebted, under God, for their awakening and conversion, now declared, in the name of the entire society, that they considered Albright to be a *genuine Evangelical preacher*, and recognized him as their teacher, and as such they solemnly consecrated him. Upon this the society adopted the Holy Scriptures, of both the Old and New Testaments, as their *Articles of Faith and Practice*, and presented to Albright a written acknowledgment in accordance with their declaration concerning him, signed by all present. (History of the Evangelical Association, Vol. I, Page 26, 27.)

The above mentioned written recognition reads in the original as follows: "We, the undersigned, as Evangelical and Christian friends, declare and recognize Jacob Albright as a truly Evangelical minister in word and deed, and a believer (Bekenner) in the universal Christian Church, and the communion of saints. To this we testify as brethren and elders of his society. Given in the State of Pennsylvania, the 5th of Nov. 1803.\* Signed

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\*) In the above document the place where this "council meeting" was held, and the organization of the Evangelical Association com-



by John Walter, A. Liesser, and fourteen other persons, who are named above."

This is a valuable and important document. It is an earnest testimony of a number of men, who were not inferior in honesty and truthfulness to their cotemporaries, of the good character and life of Albright. The acknowledgment of Albright as a preacher was based upon the fact that he was a believer in the universal Christian Church, and

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pleted, which was commenced in the year 1800, through the formation of classes, is not given more specifically than that it occurred in the State of Pennsylvania. At a certain time a picture appeared of the house in which J. Albright died, at that time inhabited by George Becker, near the Albright Church, and the village of Klinefeltersville, in Lebanon County, Pennsylvania—the neighborhood is also called Muehlbach—with the assertion that this council was held, and the Evangelical Association organized in this house. Relative to this picture, John Dreisbach wrote an earnest letter, in which he says: "The council of the Evangelical Association, Nov. 3d, 1803, was not held at Muehlbach. The brethren J. Albright and J. Walter did not labor there before the Winter of 1805-6. It would be very desirable, that in the gathering of fragments of our history, that we be careful not to make mistakes, but to publish the truth only."—A report left by George Becker, the owner and the then occupant of the house, concerning the beginning and continuation of the work of God in his house and vicinity, which was copied by John Klinefelter, agrees with J. Dreisbach's statement that the beginning of the work took place at a later period, and that the Evangelical preachers were "*new preachers*" to them in 1805-6. George Miller says, that he commenced to preach in 1805, in the house of a Mr. Lescher, in Lancaster County, which was only a few miles distant from Becker's. To that place, John Klinefelter told me, Beckers and others went from Muehlbach to attend meeting in 1805, and afterwards invited these ministers also to preach in their place at Muehlbach. The history of the Evangelical Association shows that in 1806 an awakening took place there, and a class was organized. This was the *beginning* of the work at that place. Evidence could be multiplied if it were necessary.

[R. Y.]



hence belonged to the "communion of saints." And how could a person be a true Evangelical minister who was *not* from the very start united with Christ in this spiritual priesthood, even though he possessed all external forms and titles. It is plain enough, that the views of J. Walter, A. Liesser and the fourteen "elders" (which expression here means the elders and chief members of the Association, who have been named already) were not superficial. Really, J. Walter and A. Liesser, as the report states, ordained J. Albright by the laying on of hands and prayer, to be a preacher and elder, thus solemnly consecrating him, with the consent of the fourteen elders, to the office of an Evangelical preacher. A very similar instance is related in Acts 13. 1, 3: "Now there were in the Church that was at Antioch, certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas and Simeon, that was called Niger and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the Tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away." This ordination, through laying on of hands, accompanied with fasting and prayer, was not performed by the apostles. These prophets and teachers, Barnabas,

Simeon, Lucius, Manaen and Saul, stood upon equal footing; there is not the least proof, and scarcely a probability at hand, that any one of them was ordained. But Simeon, Lucius and Manaen ordained Saul and Barnabas, by fasting, prayer and laying on of hands. Relative to the fundamental outlines and several particulars, the ordination of J. Albright is a parallel to the above.

AN ACT OF THE "ROYAL PRIESTHOOD."

"Ye are . . . a royal priesthood."—1 Pet. 2. 9.

This action of the pious fathers of the Evangelical Association, by which they, being laymen, consecrated J. Albright to the office of the ministry, has often been criticised and ridiculed by such as cling to the so-called "Apostolic Succession"; that, namely, only such ordained ministers are to be recognized as servants of Christ, and rightful stewards of the ministerial office, and to be acknowledged as such by the Church, who were consecrated by such ministers as could trace back their consecration to this office uninterruptedly through the history of the Church to the apostles. Of this "cunningly devised fable," we find not a word in the New Testament. Neither has any one yet found it possible, in any way to prove *such* a succession, although many learned heads have attempted it.

All true believers who are united with the glorified Saviour, compose his Church and constitute a

“holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices,” whose head is the King and High-Priest, Jesus Christ. By virtue of this union with him they are one with him, and thus become “kings and priests *before God and the Father.*” Such have at any time and at any place upon earth, whenever and wherever the outward “successive” ordination has become impossible, through the spiritual decline of the Church and ministry, and the rejection and persecution of godly men, the *unquestionable right, through Christ, formally to ordain and consecrate to the office of the ministry any one whom Divine Providence and the Spirit of Christ calls unto this office*, as was without any doubt the case with Jacob Albright, the continuation of a true ministry being an absolute necessity. After all, in matters of this kind, everything depends upon the sanction and confirmation of the great Head of the Church. And it is an undeniable fact, that Christ has recognized, sealed and blessed the ministry of the Evangelical Association in the labors of Albright, and in hundreds of his followers, with “the impartation of the Holy Spirit, according to his will,” unto the awakening, conversion, and sanctification of thousands, who, in accordance with Paul’s teaching, are “*seals*” to their ministry. What further evidence do we need, or who can produce any stronger testimony? Who will venture to “fight against God,” and say that in this thing he

has made a mistake? In view of all these things, how presumptuous indeed becomes the action of a certain Synod in Pennsylvania, which, some years since, undertook to sit in judgment upon this matter, and, in keeping with High Church arrogance, declared by resolution that the Evangelical Association with her ministry was not a part of the general Church, because, forsooth, she was not in the "apostolic succession"! Therefore her ordination was invalid, and hence a deserter from our Church was re-ordained. Certainly a rare instance of ridiculous self-conceit! The learned gentlemen (?) composing this Synod tried their utmost to prove that Albright had no right whatever to commence the work he did, and as it stood outside of the Church it would soon disappear. It was declared by these men that the Evangelical Association was like a mush-room which grows in a night and withers the next day! However, instead of seeing their prophecy fulfilled, these learned (?) Doctors of Divinity have seen the fulfillment of a prophecy made by Isaiah: "But the Lord shall rise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee." Since the Lord has now vindicated the work of his servant, and no doubt this Synod has wisely concluded not to be guilty of any more such blunders, we will forbear mentioning its name.

(The year 1804 is a blank which for want of information cannot be filled.)

“THERE IS ANOTHER SPIRIT IN THIS MAN.”

During the year 1805 Albright traveled through Centre County, Pennsylvania, and stopped in the town of Millheim, with a Mr. Bachman. Mr. B. soon saw that there was “another spirit” in this man from that of their pastor. Bachman then gave him permission to preach in his house. In the interval a man by the name of Christopher Spangler, of Brush Valley, came to Bachman’s house. He was told what kind of a man Mr. Albright was, whereupon Spangler said: “Tell him to come and preach at my place also.” When Albright reached Spangler’s house, which was not quite finished, while taking off his overcoat, he said: “Why, you are building a fine house, but if you would be converted, it would still be more so to you.” This served as the introduction to his sermon.

The sermon made such an impression upon Spangler, that he soon began to seek the Lord, and ere long found peace in the blood of Christ. Afterward a class was formed there, of which Spangler became the leader. Later he became a local preacher. Spangler was severely persecuted, but he clung so firmly to Jesus, and was also so attached to Albright, that nothing moved him. Even up to old age, he spoke with special appreciation of Albright as his spiritual father.



## ALBRIGHT FINDS ACCESS TO P. BREIDENSTEIN.

On a snowy day in the Fall of 1805, Albright came to a man by the name of Philip Breidenstein, who lived about three miles south-west of Lebanon, Pa. As Breidenstein formerly lived at Adamstown, near Albright's neighborhood, he and Albright were not strangers to each other. Albright had already asked B. several times for permission to preach at his place, but was refused. Still he finally yielded, and Albright came to preach there in the afternoon, on a week day. But inasmuch as the weather was very unfavorable, the neighbors did not come.\* Breidenstein, just at this time, had a pump-maker at work, who, with the assistants and Breidenstein's family, composed the audience. To this small congregation Albright preached with great earnestness. As the family were seating themselves at the dinner table, Albright remarked: "To-day is my fasting day, be so kind and excuse me." After the meal was over, however, he said: "I think I ought to eat a little after all, since I am not well, and have some distance to travel, and the weather is very unpleasant." This was certainly very discreet of Albright, as his health was already failing. But how great the malice of some persons against this humble

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\*) Not until after Albright's death was there regular preaching here. [R. Y.]



servant of the Lord was, the language of the pump-maker shows. He said to Mrs. Breidenstein, after Albright had left: "I understand this parson very well. When he saw that you had no turkey prepared for him, he acted as though he wanted to fast, with the hope that something better would be served, but since that did not happen, he thought: I must after all eat what is on the table." So Satan still propagates his lies through persons who yield to him, as he did in the beginning through a serpent! Breidenstein attended the funeral services of Albright, and was so wrought upon that he was converted, became a useful local preacher, and a pillar in the Church.

NOT RECEIVED.

At this time the fires of persecution were intense. It seemed as though, for the time being, permission had been given to the powers of darkness to kindle a little hell on earth; so that many who had only been converted from darkness unto light, but not from the power of Satan unto God, turned away, as is seen by the following incident:

Albright had made an appointment at the house of George Leitner's father, residing in one of the counties of Eastern Pennsylvania. However, on account of the fierce persecutions, Leitner recalled the appointment. When Albright arrived, at the appointed time, he was informed by Leitner that his neighbors had persuaded him not to have the

appointment filled, whereupon Albright admonished him, with tears, to be converted to God. This exhortation made such an impression upon Leitner's son George, that he was converted, and afterwards became an itinerant minister in our Church. Thus Albright's tears were not shed in vain. "They that sow in tears shall reap with joy."

A REMARKABLE "BIG MEETING."

These "big meetings" were indeed great and promotive of much good at that time. They usually continued two days. The ministers, Albright, Walter, Miller, and afterwards others also, and the members from far and near assembled together. After having sanctified themselves by fasting and prayer for these occasions, unusual showers of blessings were expected and received.

On October 25, 1806, such a meeting convened at the residence of Martin Dreisbach, Sen., in Buffalo Valley, Union County, Pennsylvania. G. Miller reports it as follows: "Both ministers and people assembled—I was appointed to preach the first sermon. During preaching the power of God came upon the congregation in so great a measure, that many fell upon their knees, and with tears besought the Lord to save them. Albright and Walter preached with power and great plainness, so that the meeting was finally blessed with a mighty outpouring of the Spirit, and in all the rooms of the house the cries of penitent

souls were heard, and many were converted to God."

After this meeting, on October 27, Albright, Walter and Miller covenanted together, to prosecute the work of God with still greater earnestness, and Albright exhorted the other two brethren, courageously to continue in the work, and lead as many souls to Christ as they possibly could.

These men were noble soldiers for Immanuel! And what an excellent compact they entered into among themselves! Should not this noble example be imitated by Evangelical preachers everywhere?

#### WHAT A SO-CALLED "CHRIST" DID.

It was about the year 1807, as Albright was filling an appointment at Michael Meess', in New Berlin, Pa., that, at the close of the sermon, a strong man by the name of Adam Christ, who was known as a fighter, moved towards Albright, and requested him to step out of the house with him, inasmuch as he wished to tell him something privately. A. requested very mildly, to tell him right there what he desired to say to him. But Christ insisted that A. should go out with him, upon which he arose to go. Meanwhile, John Dreisbach whispered to A. to beware of this man. Albright made an attempt to go back again, but Christ seized him and tried to force him out, at the same time trembling like a leaf. Albright

remained quiet and composed, and asked C. again what he wanted. Outside were a number of roughs, who were awaiting Albright, in order to abuse him. Brother Dreisbach then came to his assistance, and warned C. not to injure A., upon which C. yielded, and A. returned to his seat. Although it is not positively known that Albright was ever actually harmed, yet it is established that he was frequently in danger of losing his life but was always safely and remarkably rescued out of the hands of his enemies. Thus the Lord is with his servants "every day."



## CHAPTER XI.

## The First Conference, and the Closing Labors of Albright.

## ALBRIGHT'S PAST SUCCESS.

“THIS devout man had now preached the Gospel about eleven years, under violent persecutions, and almost entirely without human aid, and finally also with great bodily weakness. God gave the increase to the planting and watering, and the fruit consisted in the conversion of several hundred persons, among whom were four itinerant preachers, three local preachers, and twenty class-leaders and exhorters. The need of holding a regular conference was now felt.

## FIRST CONFERENCE — ALBRIGHT IS ELECTED BISHOP.

This Conference was held about the middle of November, 1807, in the house of Samuel Becker, at Muehlbach (now), Lebanon County, Pa. All ministers and class-leaders and exhorters, 28 in number, were present. By this Conference Jacob Albright was elected Bishop, George Miller, Presiding Elder, and John Dreisbach and Jacob Frey were received as ministers on probation.\* It was

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\*) The Conference minutes contain the following paragraph *verbatim*: “4. Jacob Albright was elected Bishop by the majority of votes, and George Miller as Elder.”—At the “council” in 1803, Albright was already declared and ordained “Elder,” and by this

also resolved, that Albright should compile Articles of Faith, and a Discipline for the Church, which he also declared himself willing to do, if God should give him health and prolong his life. Here, then, was abundant labor for this enfeebled man. Probably no one had any presentiment, that already in the course of a few months, he would enter into his eternal rest.

#### FORM OF THE FIRST PREACHER'S LICENSE.

At this Conference a license as preacher on trial was voted to John Dreisbach, which is not only interesting in itself, but also of much importance, as it is written and signed by Albright himself,—the only *specimen of Albright's hand-writing* that could be found, after searching for some years,—and also because it is a historical document of no small import. It reads as follows:

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Conference, in 1807, he was elected Bishop. What this Conference understood by *Bishop* is very clear, if we consider that they were Methodistic in their teachings and practice. Albright himself had been a zealous Methodist, and was still such in spirit, and by his side the M. E. Church was zealously at work, with their devout and highly respected Bishop Asbury at the head, and on the preacher's license which this Conference issued, she even called herself the "*Newly-Formed Methodist Conference!*" Who could then at all doubt that this conference elected Albright Bishop in the Methodistic sense? This office was not looked upon by them as a mere title. Jacob Albright was elected Bishop, and is, according to the action of the Conference, and the wording of the minutes, without contradiction the *first* Bishop of the Evangelical Association, notwithstanding that this Church assumed her present name at a later period.

[R. Y.]



“Upon the authority of the Newly-Formed Methodist Conference, which has given John Dreisbach a good testimony, and is willing to receive him as a minister into our Communion; so I, the undersigned, give him the permission to serve in the office according to our regulation, and is also appointed thereto, as a preacher for one year on trial, if he conducts himself as is meet according to the Word of God.

The 14th of November, 1807.

JACOB ALBRIGHT.\*

This document proves conclusively that at that time no special Church name had been chosen, simply saying “our Communion.” At the second Conference, held in 1809, the name adopted was: “The So-called Albright’s People,” later, however, this name was changed to “*Die Evangelische Gemeinschaft*,” which was accepted as the permanent Church name. For the time being the Conference had assumed the name of: “The Newly-Formed Methodist Conference,” because their doctrines and methods were Methodistic. These facts again show that it was not the purpose of Albright and his co-laborers to organize a new denomination, and simply gather a crowd of ecclesiastical followers. Seven years had already passed since the

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\*) See the original on the opposite page. It can be very readily seen that Albright wrote with a trembling hand. Over exertion and exhaustion of his physical strength were plainly visible.

Auf Bevollmächtigung der Versammelten Methodistischen Konferenz,  
die ein gutes Zeugniß gegeben, dem *Jo. Dreisbach*

und willens ist ihn aufzunehmen als *Lehrer* . . . in unsere  
Gemeinschaft; so gebe ich, der Unterschiebene, ihm die Verlaubniß  
das Amt nach unserer Ordnung zu bedienen, und auch dazu verord-  
net ist zum *Lehrer* auf *Leinwand*, so er sich gëhrend nach  
Gottes Wort verhalten thut,

Den 14ten November — 1807 *Jacob Albright*



formation of the first classes, and the work in the meanwhile had spread and multiplied, but no Church name had as yet been adopted, and it seems they did not even concern themselves about it. Soul-saving was the chief purpose and business of these men of God. Other matters of minor importance were left entirely to the guidance of Providence. Albright's opinion in reference to the origin and perpetuation of the work, he clearly expressed, shortly before his death, in a conversation he held with John Dreisbach, relating to the publication of Articles of Faith and a Church Discipline, which had been entrusted to Albright by the Conference, but which he was unable to accomplish. *"If it is the will of God that you should be and remain a Church, then he will also provide for you in this respect; men will appear among you who will be able to accomplish that which I shall not be able to do. It is the work of God, and it is in his hands, he will also provide for it."*

The will and providence of God ruled and guided this servant of Christ. His prophecy, that God would call "men who will be able to accomplish" the work, was abundantly fulfilled. The organization of the Evangelical Association has been divinely confirmed, in spite of persecutions, resolutions of hostile high-churchly Synods, composed of highly educated (?) gentlemen, to the contrary notwithstanding!

## CLOSING LABORS.

From the time of this conference session, Albright's health failed very rapidly, yet he still traveled and labored as much as possible. He frequently accompanied John Dreisbach on his circuit, and gave him much useful instruction, of which the latter, in his good old age, often spoke to the writer of this book with great interest. He conducted himself towards J. D. as a father to his son. If he made a failure in preaching, Albright would encourage him again. When they were attacked by wicked men, he defended him in a manner that the mouths of the enemies were stopped. Here follows an example :

## “ HAVE SALT IN YOURSELVES.”

During the first journey of Dreisbach, in company with Albright, through Lancaster County, Pa., they stopped with an aged farmer. At the supper table this farmer began in a harsh tone : “ Albright, what kind of a young man is this whom you brought with you ? ” A. answered that he was from Shamokin, and that he was a young minister. Farmer : “ He a minister ? If it will not happen to him as it did to a young Methodist minister, who came into this neighborhood and made quite a stir, until he became too intimately acquainted with a young girl, and was compelled to flee.” Albright repulsed this disgraceful attack

with cutting sarcasm, by answering: "Such things have even already happened to *old men*." The farmer being himself guilty, of course he became speechless. The next day Albright asked Dreisbach why he had not replied to the farmer the previous evening. Dreisbach answered, "that he did not consider it becoming to intrude upon a conversation carried on between two older persons, and concluded the matter should be a warning, and that my conduct should put the slanderer to shame." "I appreciate your modest bearing," was Albright's reply, "however, Christ also says: 'Have salt in yourselves.'"

Albright also gave Dreisbach instructions in reference to proper text divisions, and exhorted him to be careful in the use of language, especially in reference to the use of the Pennsylvania German dialect, in the pulpit. Albright himself was very careful in the proper arrangement of his sermons, as well as in the use of language, and instructed his preachers on these things properly, of which the above incident furnishes a good example. Notwithstanding the very unfavorable circumstances in which he was placed, it was Albright's aim to become as fully qualified as possible to perform his ministerial duties, at the same time advising the young preachers to diligence in this respect. No doubt if he were still among us, he would be a strong supporter of our Evangelical schools, and the cause



of education. His good sense would not allow him to occupy any other position.

#### HIS OPINION ABOUT PUBLIC WORSHIP.

In a certain meeting the exercises were becoming quite lively, some shouting in an unbecoming and noisy way. He seemed to dislike these boisterous demonstrations, and cried out ironically: "Can you not *dance more gracefully?*" But in another meeting, which was cold and dead, which displeased him even still more, he whispered to Dreisbach: "It is so cold and dead! Oh, pray! pray!" While he was heartily in favor of a spiritual worship, he disliked extravagant demonstrations. "Christ Jesus should be the Master of the assembly."—Amen!

#### ALBRIGHT A GOOD COUNSELLOR.

In almost everything Albright was able to give sound, practical advice. Dreisbach exchanged his horse's bridle one day with a brother, who demanded of him 25 cents to boot. D. gave him the money, because he wished to have the bridle on account of its bit. A. told him afterwards, "You should not have done so, for your bridle was worth as much as the other—we should be economical with money, and not be extravagant with it; we can often use it, and to do so is not avarice." Well said! Money can be used very advantageously for missionary and educational purposes, for the erec-

tion of Church edifices, and the support of indigent ministers and children of God.

#### THE SINNER'S BLACK HEART.

One day Albright was busy in greasing his shoes, which in those days was a general custom, when through an accident the oil vessel was upset, the contents of which were very black, upon which he remarked: "The sinner's heart is just as black."

The above incidents and remarks show how ready Albright was to use each circumstance for making applications, in accordance with the direction of God's Word: "Whatsoever things are true, . . . if there is any virtue, if there is any praise, think on these things."

#### TELL IT TO JESUS.

J. Dreisbach once complained in a sermon, that he himself realized his deficiency, upon which Albright told him privately: "When you feel your wants again, then tell it to Jesus, but do not complain of it to your hearers; it will not help them, nor you either." Hence, A. did not look with much favor upon apologies offered by Christ's ambassadors.

#### HOW ALBRIGHT TALKED WITH GOD.

Albright spent much time in secret prayer. Often he took his Bible and went into a grove, where he read God's Word and prayed until he was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Dreisbach once met him after such a season of

prayer, of which he says: "Blessed of God, Albright walked backward and forward, singing softly in deep meditation, manifesting by his gestures and movements how the joy of the Lord filled his soul." This paragraph reveals to us the sanctuary where Albright sought the preparation for his work, and solves the problem of his wonderful success, and shows the reasons for the blessings which have rested upon the labors of this devout man, even unto this day.

HE USED THE "LORD'S PRAYER."

Not only did he pray from his heart in public and private, but he frequently closed his prayers with the Lord's prayer; which is to be highly recommended.

"FOR HE WAS A GOOD MAN."

In his intercourse with individuals of all ages and positions, he always conducted himself like a true Christian gentleman. Earnestness, cheerfulness, affability and firmness were beautifully blended in his character, being "well furnished unto every good word and work." Referring to these facts, Bro. Dreisbach says: "His excellent instructions, and his pious example were very useful to me, as well as his earnest prayers, his child-like trust in God, and his humble submission to his holy will. These things made deep impressions upon my mind, and were a great help to me in my calling and work as a Christian minister. Oh,

what a blessing to a young preacher to have such a leader and counsellor!" On another occasion Bro. D. remarked: "Albright was a man of whom we have no occasion to be ashamed in any respect."

The piety and activity of this man of God speak in a loud voice, especially to his successors, the ministers of the Evangelical Association. Oh, that all might heed it, and take the lessons it gives deeply to heart!

#### A WONDERFUL MEETING.

During the Winter of 1808 it happened that Albright, in his travels to seek lost souls and lead them to Christ, arrived during a snow-storm at the house of Peter Radenbach, near Lingelstown, Dauphin County, Pa., and asked for a night's lodging, which was granted him. Towards evening the storm abated, and the heavens became clear. Meanwhile Albright had made himself known as a preacher of the Gospel, and asked whether he would be permitted to preach there that evening. There was no objection raised. Radenbach sent word around in the neighborhood that a strange minister had come, who would preach at his house on that evening. The neighbors wondered what this meant, for R. was a leader and chorister of the Lutheran Church, and in general a respectable and loyal Churchman—and that now there should be preaching in *his house* by a *stranger*, this was something new.

Notwithstanding the snow, the room was filled with people. Albright took for his text 1 John 1. 9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." His theme was: "Salvation from sin," which in that section was a new, yea, an unknown doctrine. The sermon was delivered in a clear and impressive manner, and every point fully established by the Scriptures. Toward the close of the sermon some of his hearers became very restive under the earnest, searching truths, and one arose and said: "This is preaching too sharply." Another arose and asked Albright: "Do you mean me? You have preached at me!" Albright replied: "Yes, my friend, if it fits you, then I mean you." Radenbach, however, being a man of considerable influence among his neighbors, soon restored order. After the meeting was closed, there was quite a stir among the people as to whether the stranger had taught errors or truth. The majority seemed to think he was too severe. After all had departed, except a brother of Mr. Radenbach, the latter said to Albright: "You have preached a strange doctrine—that we can and must be made free from sin—our ministers do not teach thus. I have attended divine service from my youth up, but have never heard anything like it." Albright replied: "My dear sir, to the law and to the testimony. The Word



of God must decide these questions. Here is the Bible; please read it for yourself, and be convinced whether what I have taught you is true or not. If what I have taught cannot be established by the Bible, I will recede from the position which I have taken." Radenbach then read the entire chapter from which the text had been selected, and also referred to the Catechism. He was very soon convinced that Albright's teaching was Scriptural. But after the books were laid aside, he remarked that he could not fully comprehend the matter. Albright then exhorted both of the brothers in an affectionate manner, and advised them to search the Scriptures earnestly, in order to discover the truth. Radenbach then said to his brother: "There is really something not right with us; we have been kept in blindness, for this man has proven his doctrine by the Word of God." Upon which his brother angrily exclaimed: "Yes! if this man was'nt a \* *Knierutscher*, it might be true; but our minister has never preached thus." The conversation then closed, but Albright's sermon and exhortations had made a deep impression. Good seed had been sown. He left another appointment for Sabbath morning. In the meanwhile, however, there arose a great excitement in the neighborhood. At the appointed time a mul-

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\*) One who prays kneeling.



titude of people assembled to hear and see this “*seducer*.” Albright preached with great power, but was compelled to close early, in order to reach his appointment in the afternoon. At the same time a number of persons had met in the church, but it was proposed to have no service, but to go to Radenbach’s and drive the “*Strawelers*” \* away, else R. would be led astray, and the congregation would lose its chorister. The proposition was immediately and eagerly accepted by all present, but on coming to the house, they found the meeting closed, and all of Radenbach’s family had gone along with Albright to the afternoon meeting at Becker’s. Disappointed and vexed, they returned to their homes, saying: “All is lost; they are now led astray.” Sometime afterwards a two-days’ meeting was held at this same place, when Albright, Walter and Miller were present. A great multitude of people, who were in a great measure possessed with the spirit of persecution, had assembled. The pressure of the power of darkness seemed to rest upon the meeting until Sabbath morning, when John Walter began to preach. The power of God now came upon the congregation, so that sinners literally fell to the ground, as if they had been shot down. Some

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\*) A word taken from Satan’s vocabulary, literally translated—scramblers. [R. Y.]

called aloud for mercy, others were speechless. These manifestations caused great consternation among the people, the persecutors seeming as if bound with fetters. The labors with the penitents continued uninterruptedly until the following morning! Wonderful conversions took place. One woman suddenly cried out: "O Jesus! I shall be lost! — lost!!" Her husband wanted to take her away, but soon such a terror fell upon him that he hastily ran away. The woman came back again to the meeting and prayed, until Jesus spoke peace to her soul.

Nothing could now check the work. A class was organized. Radenbach and his wife also found peace with God, and united with the despised little flock of praying people. \*

On Easter-day, 1808, a "big meeting" was held in Albany Township, Berks County, Pa., in the house of John Brobst, where Albright stationed the preachers for the ensuing year. A. did this usually at "big meetings," after consultation with the preachers, and often also with the leaders and the most experienced members. Seldom did the ministers travel a whole year upon a circuit, sometimes only from six to eight months, but from this

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\*) A son of Peter Radenbach related the above, and his report was substantially confirmed by John Dreisbach, and corrected in one point relative to a date.\* It furnishes an example of the labors, struggles and triumphs of Albright and his co-laborers. [R. Y.]

time forth they mostly remained a year. This meeting was crowned with God's rich blessing. Eight days later another "big meeting" commenced at P. Radenbach's, where, besides Albright, G. Miller and John Dreisbach were also present. But Albright had failed so much in health for some time, that he was not able to preach at this meeting. Here he extended the parting hand for the last time, and while doing so, he said to Dreisbach: "Contend unto blood and life to press into the kingdom of God."

During one of these last meetings he gave his co-laborers the following remarkable and excellent admonition: *"In all that you do, or think of doing, let your object be to enhance God's glory, and advance the work of his grace in your own hearts, as well as among your brethren and sisters; and be diligent co-workers in the way which God has pointed out to you, to which he will grant you his blessing."*

These words are worthy to serve as a motto for every Conference, and every preacher and officer in the Evangelical Association. Only when we preserve this truly Evangelical mind and spirit, can God carry out his purpose through us as a Church.

## RETROSPECTION.

Our esteemed Albright had now arrived at the terminus of his itinerant life, which he had prosecuted for about twelve years, amidst indescribable hardships, persecutions and struggles, for the honor of God, and the salvation of precious souls.

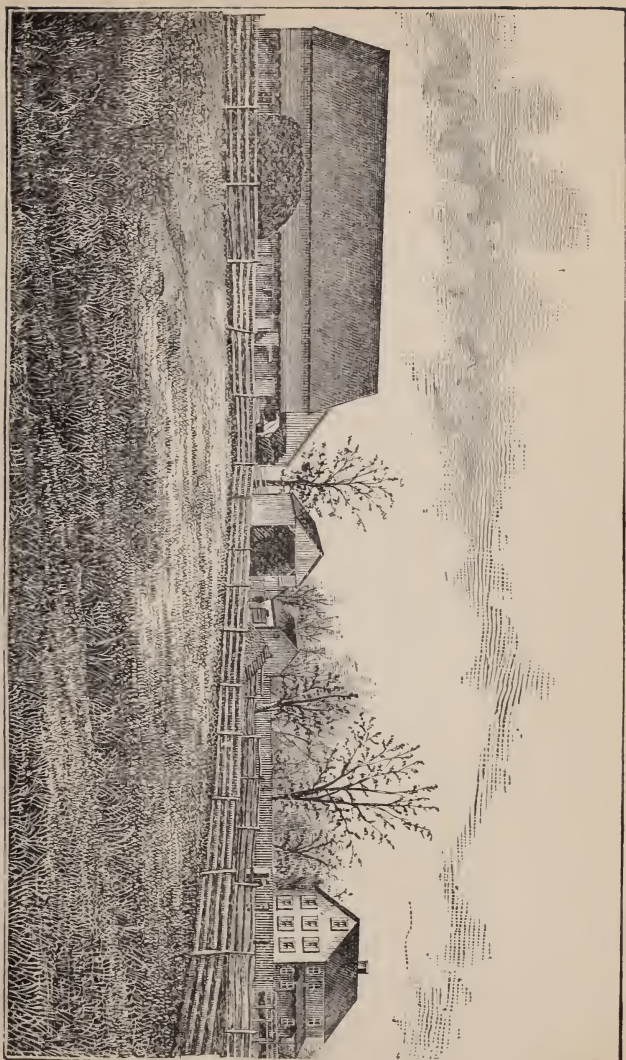
His health now rapidly failed, and only a few weeks before his decease he started homeward *to die*. What thoughts revolved in his mind at this time, in the review of the past, may be gleaned from the following touching words, found among his papers: "And now I thank God, the Most High; and to him be eternal praise for his grace, which he has given unto me—that he has kept me steadfast in the faith and pure in life, through trials, persecutions and sufferings, which have befallen me in this life, permitting me to see that his grace was not bestowed upon me in vain. The seals of my ministry are the converted brethren and sisters, whom I have begotten through the Gospel, and whom I am certain to meet again in heaven, if they remain steadfast in faith, love, and hope. And I trust firmly in God, that unto me will be given the inheritance of the saints in light — *an incorruptible crown.*"

## CHAPTER XII.

## Albright's Sickness and Death.

ALBRIGHT'S sickness was quick consumption, brought on by over-exertion and exhaustion. On his way home from Linglestown, he became so weak that he was compelled to stop at Muehlbach (now Klinefeltersville, Lebanon County), at the house of Mr. George Becker. On entering the house he said: "Have you my bed ready, I have come to die." Here he laid himself down to breathe his last. During his illness he enjoyed intimate communion with God, and yet it is very remarkable that he was once more called upon to pass through a severe trial, during which he earnestly called upon the Lord for help. A number of brethren and sisters who had come to visit him, were deeply affected by his humble prayers of trust, and united with him in his supplications. Soon he achieved a glorious and, as it proved, his last and eternal victory! He praised God that he was permitted to die surrounded by the people of God, instead of the children of this world, whose only conversation is concerning the affairs of this life. His joy in the Lord was now so great, that he called upon those present to help him praise the Lord. His dying chamber seemed to be the very gate of heaven, and filled with the presence





The house in which Jacob Albright died.—(See p. 116.)





of God. Thus he spent a few days until his last hours on earth approached. George Miller says: "He retained the perfect use of his mental faculties to the last. A tranquillity of mind, which only the consciousness of a well spent life of good works and noble deeds, and the assurance of eternal life and future blessedness can give, could be seen upon his countenance. He bade an affecting and affectionate farewell to those who were present, requesting them to unite with him in praising God, who would soon take his soul unto himself. He gratefully praised his Maker for his providential care over him, and for the guidance of his hand, through which he was led to experience peace and joy, and a living hope through faith in God. No one present remained unaffected. Everyone felt a strong desire to die as did this righteous man." One of those present says: "Thus our pious Albright calmly and peacefully fell asleep in Jesus. During the time he bade adieu to his friends with great joy, the house seemed to be filled with the power of God. The children of God felt that heaven was near, and praised God for the manifestation of his power."

Thus this servant of God entered into his rest May 18, A. D. 1808, in the fiftieth year of his life.

#### HIS FUNERAL.

On May 20th the funeral took place. A large concourse of people were in attendance, among

whom was a large number of those who had been enlightened through his teachings and labors. John Walter, his first co-laborer, delivered a powerful and affecting funeral discourse from Dan. 12. 3: "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." An eye witness reports as follows: "A number of Albright's spiritual children accompanied his remains to their resting place. Many were so richly blessed, that they praised God with shouting and joy for his unspeakable grace. Among the people, in general, the happy death of this man of God, and the richly blessed funeral sermon, produced a deep conviction and awakening. Several of the inhabitants made application to the preachers, before they left the place, to have preaching in their houses. Among them was Philip Breidenstein, who afterwards became a useful local preacher. In this way our sainted brother was, even in death, an instrument in the hands of God to spread the Gospel and true Christianity."

Albright's remains were buried in a family cemetery, where several years ago the "Albright Church" was erected to his memory. Upon a plain tombstone is the following inscription: "In memory of the Evangelical preacher, Jacob Albright. Born May 1st, 1759, and died May 18, 1808, aged 49 years and 17 days. His remains

rest under this stone. 'Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.' (Ps. 116. 15.)"

#### IMMEDIATE RESULTS.

To the ministers, who clung to Albright with most intense love as true children to a good father, his sudden departure was a most painful shock. "They often gave vent to their feelings in the most sorrowful weeping, and their grief would have become almost intolerable, if their love to him had not wished him the enjoyment of sweet rest, after his days of hardship, and if God's promises had not been their strength and comfort." The membership, which largely consisted of his spiritual children, also deeply mourned on account of the loss of their spiritual father.

But the world laughed and triumphed: "Now they are defeated; Albright is dead, and now it is all over with them," etc. "But," said G. Miller, "in this they greatly erred; though Albright had died, God still lived, who owned this work as his, and hence also knew how to prosper and spread the same. Thanks be unto the high and glorious God, who does not despise the lowly and the humble, but rather chooses them for his possession."

Albright's death had the tendency to induce preachers and people to consecrate themselves more fully to God and his work, and the work of the Lord grew mightily unto this day, so that the remarkable prophecy of Isa. 60. 22, was literally

fulfilled in the growth of the Evangelical Association: "A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation; I, the Lord, will hasten it in his time." *Hallelujah!*



## CHAPTER XIII.

## Closing Remarks and Testimonies.

GEORGE Miller, who knew Albright well, and had watched him closely, has given the following testimony, which may well be inserted at this place: "This godly man had preached the Gospel nearly twelve years. The immediate fruit of his labors was the conversion of three hundred souls, who were diligently striving to serve God, and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. They strove to build each other up in the unity of faith, in accordance with the command of Christ and his apostles, and the directions of their faithful teacher. These directions and Articles of Faith and Church Discipline were printed about a year after his death. They wrought great good, and led many into the way of truth and the true knowledge of God. His public prayers and sermons were powerful, penetrating and convincing, although delivered in a simple manner, not with enticing words of human wisdom, but he spake as one moved by the Holy Ghost, the power of which manifested itself in all his addresses. Love for his fellow men seemed to pervade him; he prayed for his enemies and persecutors, and neglected no opportunity to promote their salvation, and to lead them into the path of truth. Even his



gestures, looks and movements often revealed the presence of God's Spirit within him, so that his hearers were deeply affected, without the utterance of many words on his part; and there were times when he entirely forgot his body and himself, and such a degree of inspiration was upon him that he moved from the desk into the middle of the room, without perceiving it himself. When these strong emotions filled his soul, wonderful expressions of joy were seen in his countenance, and praises to God flowed from his lips, and his whole being was in motion. Whatever comes from the heart reaches the heart, and hence his hearers were usually so touched, that the seed of the Word did not fall among thorns, but bore precious fruit. He discharged his ministerial duties with earnestness and punctuality; he never neglected to attend an appointed meeting, if the condition of his health would in any wise permit him to be there, nor did he merely discharge his ministerial duties as such, but fulfilled them with delight and joy. He was diligent in cultivating and promoting spiritual union with and among his brethren; watching with paternal solicitude over their conduct, himself being a good example, endeavoring to the best of his ability to promote true holiness of heart among them.

“The persecutions and sufferings which Albright was compelled to endure for Christ's sake, he bore with great patience, offsetting them with gentleness

and kindness, considering the grace of God which he had received such a great blessing, that all the sufferings of this life bore no comparison to the joy it afforded. He therefore remained constantly steadfast in the doctrine of Christ, in calling sinners to repentance and faith, and in urging believers to follow after holiness, and thus he became a chosen vessel of God in promoting the revival of true godliness, for the grace of God rested visibly upon him and his work. None of his enemies, though trying their utmost, could do him the least harm, for in all that he did, he sought the glory of God. This was one of the chief principles that governed his life, and which he also always endeavored to inculcate. He lived nearly eighteen years in a state of grace, and realized many experiences of the gracious providence and protection of God in his earthly career."

From this short description it is clear that those persons who live up to his teaching and discipline, have no need of being ashamed to acknowledge that they became acquainted with God and Christ through the instructions of this faithful teacher, neither of the fact that they are called *Albrights*, partly from mockery, and partly also because they received the true knowledge of God through his teaching, and the assurance that they, with all true Christians, belong to Christ, and in no wise desire to be separated from such as, in the mortification

of all carnal and sinful lusts and desires, have consecrated their lives wholly to God, and in truth, uprightness, and without disguise or hypocrisy follow Christ.

John Dreisbach, who was his co-laborer, and others who were well acquainted with him, furnish the following facts: As a preacher Albright was very cheerful and amiable, yet very discreet and thoughtful. He was an early riser, searched diligently in the Scriptures, and lived a devoted life. At times he retired to a grove with his Bible for meditation and prayer. When stopping with a family, he frequently went to a room alone, and spent hours in prayer before preaching. After the people were assembled, he came from his closet so filled with God's Spirit, that his countenance seemed to verify the language of the poet:

*“In seinem Angesichte flammt  
Die Weisheit, die von oben stammt.”*

“The wisdom coming from above glowed in his face.”

This made such impressions upon the people that at times deep emotions were awakened by the heavenly expression of Albright's countenance, even before he arose to preach. In his private intercourse with the people, he spoke very appropriately about conversion, and the necessity of growth in the divine life. He was very apt in the use of incidents and

circumstances. At a certain time he met the people, where he was staying, at work in their garden. He used the occasion for a sermon, saying that Christ sweat great drops of blood in the garden of Gethsemane, in order that their hearts might become the garden of the Lord. Being on a visit at the house of his brother Daniel, who violently opposed him, he wrote upon the fly-leaf of the family Bible:

*“Viel besser nie geboren  
Als ewiglich verloren.”*

“Much better ne’er to have been born  
Than be forever lost.”

His brother was afterwards converted, and died happy in the Lord.

A cotemporary of Albright relates the following remarkable occurrence, which brings his Christian forbearance, under the severe persecutions that befell him, into prominence: “At the time when the turnpike was built from Reading to Womelsdorf, Berks County, Pa. (date not given), a number of persons were employed who were persecutors of this servant of God. One day, as Albright passed along on horseback, they picked up stones and threw them after him in such a way as to imperil his life. What was now to be done? Albright dismounted, fell upon his knees in the middle of the street, under a shower of stones, and called

upon God, as Stephen once did, *that he might have mercy upon his persecutors!* His prayer had such an effect upon his enemies, that they immediately quit throwing stones, and after a few minutes walked off, and Albright could pass on without molestation." Here the words of Holy Scripture may be fittingly applied: "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God, *whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.*" (Heb. 13. 7.)

Albright kept his clothing and person very cleanly and tidily, thereby furnishing an example, that cleanliness and godliness are closely related, and that the Christian's body should be kept pure, as a temple of the Holy Ghost. Towards the young ministers he acted like a father. If one of them did not succeed in preaching, he encouraged him. If they were attacked by wicked men, he defended them. His sermons were delivered with the demonstration of the Spirit and with power, quoting the Scriptures very freely in his discourses; he "preached the Word," and was "mighty in the Scriptures." Not unfrequently he spoke so impressively and affectingly, that the congregation were carried with him, and moved to tears. In a pleasant and moderate tone of voice, he slowly began his sermon until he had finished the introduction, after which his speech flowed like a stream, and produced extraordinary results.



## CLOSING REMARKS.

Here, then, we must leave this servant of God, who, during this necessarily imperfect description and contemplation of his simple, practical, blessed and *important* life, has become dear to our heart—without attempting to solve the mystery of his early departure. With grief we call after him: “My father! my father! the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof!” Gladly we wish him the great joy of which he is now the partaker, in continually welcoming in “that world above” the saved who have entered the kingdom of God as the fruit of his labor. How many among the heavenly host are already praising God that Jacob Albright became a saved man! And many thousands on earth are joining their voices with those in heaven! May their numbers on earth and in heaven increase to hundreds of thousands! “*And let all the people say, Amen!*”







GLIMPSES  
OF THE  
LIFE AND LABORS  
OF  
REV. JOHN WALTER,  
FIRST CO-LABORER  
OF  
JACOB ALBRIGHT.

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"AN ELOQUENT MAN AND MIGHTY IN THE SCRIPTURES."  
Acts 18. 24.





## PREFACE.

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TO write a biography of John Walter, and to present its particulars in a chronological order, as they succeeded each other in his life, is an impossibility. A few fragments only could be found, mostly without date, but these are so very precious and interesting, that they only intensify the desire that a history of his entire life might be had in a detailed and chronological order. Walter left no written record concerning himself, and hence, after the lapse of 58 years since his death, we were compelled to take such testimonies and reports as were yet obtainable. But even from these fragments it can be plainly seen, that he was a distinguished servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, and a star of the first magnitude in the heavens of the Evangelical Church, whose equal, especially in the exposition of the Scriptures and powerful preaching, according to the testimony of a number of the fathers, has hardly yet appeared among us since. That the Head of the Church, right at the beginning of the Evangelical Association, blessed her with this man, whom he chose from among the common people of this world, and through him put to nought the "strong and noble," is evidence that God has had his hand in the work from the very beginning.

R. Y.

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# LIFE AND LABORS

— OF —

## JOHN WALTER.

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### HIS DESCENT.

JOHN Walter was born on August 21, 1781, near Quakertown, Bucks County, Pa. His parents, it appears, were very poor, and John received a very limited education, so that when he commenced to preach, he was compelled *to spell* his texts. He was a man of small stature, somewhat below medium size, physically well built, and quite muscular. It seems he learned basket making, and also the tailor trade before he was of age.

### HEARS ALBRIGHT PREACH.

As Jacob Albright, upon his first journey to Bucks County, preached in his father's house, and also at Chas. Bissy's, John heard him, and was awakened and converted. Concerning the particulars of his conversion, nothing could be ascertained at this late date, but that his experience was truly Biblical is evident from his life.



## GOES HOME WITH ALBRIGHT.

Walter became so attached to his spiritual father, that he resolved to go with him to Lancaster County, Pa., to learn the brick and tile trade, while Albright was traveling and preaching.

## HE ACCOMPANIES ALBRIGHT TO HIS APPOINTMENTS.

But there was, it seems, "another spirit" in this young man, and in his nineteenth or twentieth year he commenced to accompany Albright on his field of labor, and soon became a good exhorter. In the year 1802 he began to preach, and thus became Albright's first co-laborer, and soon also a strong support and an able preacher.

## "THE FOOLISHNESS OF GOD IS WISER THAN MEN."

Here, now, was a young man without any education, who, at this time, had to spell the hymns and texts which he desired to read to his congregations, and yet ere long he became one of the most effective preachers of his day, not only in the estimation of the small number of Christians that clung to Albright, probably twenty in all, but was also acknowledged as such by scholars and professors of other Churches, who heard him preach.

## "HE PREACHED WITH POWER, AND NOT AS THE SCRIBES."

According to numerous testimonies, it is quite evident that God had blessed Walter with unusual gifts to preach, which, through prayer, searching of the Scriptures, and vigorous exercise, he used with blessed results. The doctrines of repentance, faith,

conversion, holiness, godliness, judgment, heaven, hell and all cardinal points of Bible doctrine, he taught with great clearness and power. His sermons cut like a two-edged sword, so that his congregations were often overwhelmed, and, through the power of God, led into the light of divine truth, which, in the use of numerous Scripture passages, flowed from his lips. The sinner, as well as the Christian, recognized in the divine mirror his real condition, and the blessed results were often astonishing. Here are a number of miscellaneous incidents relative to what has been said:

WHAT DR. SCHMUCKER SAYS OF HIM.

This Doctor of Theology of the Lutheran Church, who also knew something of experimental religion, heard Walter preach several times. When he heard him the first time, he said: "It is a pity that Walter did not receive a good classical education, and thereby improve his talents; he would have become the greatest preacher in the country." But most likely Walter would not have been such a powerful preacher, if he had first passed through one of the theological schools *of that time*. When Dr. Schmucker heard him the second time, he remarked: "Walter is a *deeply learned* man, and an orator, who has hardly been excelled. Oh, he speaks with supernatural power! God, in his providence, has done a great deal for him." Dr. Schmucker perceived that our John Walter pos-

essed *deep* learning, which he had drawn out of that unfathomable well of eternal wisdom—the Holy Scriptures.

TESTIMONY OF AN OLD METHODIST PREACHER.

An old Methodist preacher heard him preach, and was very much affected by the power of the Word. He afterwards said to an Evangelical brother: “Recently I heard your man Walter preach, and oh, it was wonderful!—He preached as though he wanted to bring heaven and earth together!”

WHAT H. NIEBEL REPORTS OF WALTER.

Niebel, one of the oldest Evangelical preachers, says, he heard Walter preach on a Sabbath-day, in a barn in Eastern Pennsylvania, on the subject of the final judgment, in such a manner that it seemed as if the great day was about being ushered in. Niebel involuntarily looked around, whether he could not see the Judge coming. The people were powerfully wrought upon, and many, who came there unconcerned, cried out in great distress for the pardon of their sins. A protracted meeting was held in a barn belonging to a man by the name of Ripley, in Lancaster County, Pa., the beginning of which was not very promising. But on Sabbath morning Walter preached from Rom. 13. 11, 12, in such a way, that many of the hearers broke down under the sermon, calling upon God for mercy, so that, without further preaching, the

services were uninterruptedly continued until late the next night. Among the converts were quite a number who afterwards proved themselves to be genuine Christians by their godly lives.

#### A TESTIMONY BY BISHOP SEYBERT.

In one of Bishop Seybert's remarkable ordination sermons, he related, among other things, the following: "At a certain meeting, which seemed to be lifeless and without any effect, Walter arose, saying: 'This congregation is not in the right spirit.' But when he had spoken about five minutes, a powerful influence came upon those present, and in a short time penitent souls called upon God for pardon, and a general blessing was poured out."

#### A WONDERFUL OCCURRENCE.

The following occurrence has been so abundantly corroborated by persons who were present, and by such as heard it from eye and ear witnesses, that we cannot forbear, upon the strength of such witnesses, to insert the remarkable facts connected therewith:

Walter frequently preached in the village of New Berlin, Union County, Pa., in a school-house, located in the suburbs of the place. But finally persecution arose, and the trustees of the school-house decided to close it against Walter. Upon his arrival to fill his appointment there, he found the door locked. Many people had gathered at

the house, and as it was a still, moonlight night, Walter took his stand in front of the school-house, and began to preach. Soon the power of God came upon him, and he raised his voice with such force, that he was plainly understood in the entire village. The people of the place, who were not at the school-house, stood in the doors of their dwellings, or sat at the open windows and listened. Many were so wrought upon, that they closed the windows and withdrew. As Walter was in the highest strain of his address, the door of the school-house suddenly flew open with a loud report, upon which he cried out: "God has opened unto us a door in New Berlin, and he will establish his work here, in spite of all the opposition of hell and wicked men!" The next morning the bar-hook, behind which the iron rod had been pushed, was found lying on the opposite side of the door, in the school-house. Walter's prophecy was fulfilled. Soon after a revival broke out in that place; a good class was organized; the first Church of the Evangelical Association was built there; and afterwards the first Publishing House, as also Union Seminary, were erected, and God's work has a sure foothold unto this day.

#### ANOTHER REMARKABLE MEETING.

At Conewago river, in York County, Pa., Walter held a "big meeting" at the house of a man by the name of Meier. This meeting was attended



by the mother of Adam Ettinger, one of the oldest ministers in the Evangelical Association, who had previously sought the Lord by fasting and prayer. (Bro. Ettinger fell asleep in Jesus in the year 1878.) She came prayerfully to the meeting, to prove the sermon and the work. Walter preached in the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel, and the stir among the people became great. Mother Ettinger arose and exultantly cried out with a loud voice: "This is the work of the Lord, and the precious truth of the Gospel!" At the same time she observed her son in the congregation, and running towards him, she fell upon his neck, and said: "Adam, we must be converted to God!" and thus brought her son upon his knees, where he commenced to seek the Lord.

WHAT ADAM ETTINGER SAYS OF WALTER.

"Walter was a remarkable man, highly gifted of God, and whose equal could hardly be found among thousands. Without any literary education, in a few years he became one of the most profound and most ready expositors of the Scriptures, of his time. As it was said of Apollos, so it could truthfully be said of Walter: "He was an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures." No opponent could stand before him. A reputed Doctor of Divinity, who was at that time President of the Lutheran Synod, heard Walter preach in the court house, in York, Pa., and afterwards said:



"This Walter is a learned man!" Not only in the pulpit, but also in his private intercourse he was more than a match for his opponents. Here is an example : Bro. Walter was still quite young, when one Sabbath afternoon, going from New Berlin, Pa., to his evening appointment in Centre County, he met a Lutheran minister who traveled in the same direction, and lived in the neighborhood where Walter had his appointment. During the journey the following conversation took place:

*Minister:* "Whither are you traveling, and what is your profession?"

*Walter:* "I am a preacher, and am on the way to my appointment."

*Minister:* "A preacher? And where did you study for the ministry?"

*Walter:* "At the feet of Jesus, in the school of the Lord."

*Minister:* "And what is your name?"

*Walter:* "My name is Walter."

*Minister:* "Walter, Walter! But not the Walter who so fearfully condemns the people?"

*Walter:* "Oh no, I condemn no one who does not condemn himself."

*Minister:* "But there is one by the name of Walter, as I have been informed, who passes through the country and condemns the Lutherans, the Reformed, and, in fact, all who do not belong to his sect."

*Walter:* "Why, he must be a rude, ill-mannered man! I preach, that the Lutherans, the Reformed, Catholics, and all others, if they are pious Christians, and die as such, will be saved."

*Minister:* "And where do you preach, if I may ask?"

*Walter:* "Up in Penn's Valley, in the house of a man by the name of Weis."

*Minister:* "Why, he is my neighbor! There can be but few hearers there."

*Walter:* "There may be a cause for that. There are neighborhoods where the people do not like to hear the truth, and many even are kept away by their pastors. But you certainly will attend?"

*Minister:* "Why yes, that might be possible. And would there be liberty for me to say a word, too, if something should be said that would not be in accordance with God's Word?"

*Walter:* "Oh yes, perfect liberty! I should be very much pleased to be corrected, if I should teach erroneous doctrines."

Meanwhile, they arrived at the minister's house, only a short distance from the place of the appointment. Walter once more gave the minister an urgent invitation to attend, and then they parted. Early in the evening the neighbors saw their minister, who had often warned them concerning these meetings, wending his way to the house of preach-

ing. Curiosity now induced them also to go, and the house was filled. Young Walter took the minister by the arm, and drew him behind the table, and preached with great fervor and spiritual power. When he was through, turning to the minister, he said: "Now there is liberty." The minister, however, hesitated and shrugged his shoulders, apparently very much confused. But since the whole congregation waited for him, he after all finally arose and said: "Well, neighbors, I must acknowledge, this young man has proclaimed unto us the Word of God, the truth, and nothing but the truth."

From this time forth the meetings were well attended, conversions followed, and an excellent class was organized.

#### A POWERFUL SERMON.

Near Round Top, Dauphin County, Pa., Walter preached at the residence of a Mr. Stuewig. On a Sabbath morning, in Autumn, he had an appointment at this place, but the concourse of people being very large, the meeting was held in front of the house. Walter took his stand on the porch, to preach to the multitude. The crowd, however, and the curiosity were so great, that many climbed the trees that stood near, in order to see and hear all that was going on. There were a number of unruly persons present, who, at the beginning of the sermon, were very trifling, and attempted to

create disturbance. Walter preached with great power, and fearlessly reproved the sins of the people. Suddenly he cried out: "A man's heart might break on account of this great levity." This was said with such force that nearly every one was startled, many even becoming greatly alarmed. Walter paced back and forth on the porch, and preached with mighty power. Those up in the trees hurriedly descended, mockery ceased, the people crowding back to the rear as though their lives were imperiled. A deep impression was made upon the whole audience.

#### WALTER LOST IN THE WOODS.

Walter frequently traveled from Buffalo Valley to Father Wonder's, a distance of forty miles, riding on a very poor horse. As the roads were bad, it often was late in the night until he arrived at his destination. At one time he had an appointment in Wonder's neighborhood, at the house of a man by the name of Thomas, in the month of November. It rained during the day, and the road was very slippery. Night overtook Walter, and it became so dark that he lost his way in the woods, and strayed around until he was finally hedged in by rocks and brushwood, so that he could proceed no farther. Meanwhile the people had gathered and waited until about 10 o'clock. Then it was concluded that he would not come, and several were about leaving, when they heard

some one call far off in the woods. "That," said one, "is Walter's voice." A number started in search with torches, and he was soon brought in safety to the house. Wet, cold and hungry as he was, he commenced to preach, and spoke about two hours with great power.

A THREE HOUR'S SERMON IN A MEADOW.

On a Sabbath day, after haying (the year cannot be ascertained), Walter preached in Bro. Thomas' meadow, in which a "preacher's stand" had been erected for that purpose. A large concourse of people were present. Walter selected as his text Songs of Sol. 6. 10: "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" He preached for three hours with great inspiration and overwhelming power. The following is the main part of this wonderful sermon, as Father Wonder, of Carey, Ohio, who heard it, has given it to us:

*Beloved Hearers:* Come and consider with me these glorious words of the wise man, Solomon. In his Songs he speaks of Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom, and of true Christians as his Bride. In our text he represents Christ as expressing his love, joy and admiration for his bride. Behold, what love this language indicates, and then look to Calvary, where it was exhibited in a manner unheard of before. Here Jesus offered up his life



for the purchase of his bride, and our text gives a beautiful description of how he gradually prepared her for himself. Each person belonging to this bride knows something of this by experience.

I. “*Who is she that looketh forth as the morning?*” The morning pre-supposes darkness. The sinner belongs to the kingdom of darkness. He lives in darkness, performs the works of darkness—is darkened in his understanding, heart and will. Such are called the “children of night.” Their condition answers to that of the earth when it was “without form and void,” and when “darkness was upon the face of the deep.” But Jesus, who is the “Light of the world,” arises as the Sun of Righteousness unto such souls, and his first light in the heart is as the breaking forth of the morning light. But to such souls the day has not yet fully come. Yet, at this dawning they see, partially, their sins, and the misery of their condition.

In this condition the sinner appears, in the sight of heaven, earth and hell, as the promising morning dawn—they “go forth” and draw attention to themselves. The world, which loveth darkness rather than light, will persecute them. Now when they begin to forsake the works of darkness, wicked men will accuse them of the sins they committed, together; Satan, also, will seek to hinder them, but Jesus and holy angels rejoice



greatly over them, as they break forth from their darkness into the kingdom of light, the certainty of their pardon, and the witness of their adoption.

II. "*Fair as the moon*," such souls now shine in their lives. Not in their own light, or righteousness, but like the moon reflecting the light of the sun, so do they reflect the light of Christ. They are now the children of the day — *a light in the Lord*. There is light in their understanding and in their hearts, and they know that they are on the way of life. Still, with them this light diminishes and increases as it does with the moon. In all spiritual understanding they are only children. Sometimes, in hours of trial, their light is as dim as the new moon, and generally they live only in the light of the quarter-moon, where they learn to know many besetments and remains of sin, in their feelings, words and works. The seasons, when they represent the beautiful full moon, are usually short. They have remission of sins, and, like the moon, are almost constantly floating in the light of the sun. The changes in their feelings, etc., are not permanent, and if they will only continue to walk in the light as God is in the light they will soon be,

III. "*Clear as the sun*," in the enjoyment of entire sanctification, since, by faith, Christ dwells in their hearts, and his light shines forth from their entire being, in holiness and true righteous-

ness. Such Christians are then fully separated from the world—chosen and precious in the sight of God, through Jesus Christ. They are cleansed from all unrighteousness, love God with all their heart, and their neighbor as themselves. Such persons are under the command and leadership of the Prince of our Salvation.

IV. “*Terrible as an army with banners.*” There is a severe conflict between Christ and Satan—between righteousness and sin. Christ must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. All true Christians belong to his army, and are led by this great Prince of glory. This army consists of various divisions with their banners, but as they are all “Saints of the Most High,” they are united, and present a terrible front to the legions of hell. It is said that

“Satan trembles when he sees  
The *weakest saint* upon his knees.”

In the name of Jesus they conquer. Sinners will be rescued from the jaws of Satan. Throughout entire communities, families and hearts, his works are laid in ruins, for, “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.” Thus the Christians go forth, with Christ as their Captain, conquering their enemies upon the right hand and the left. Hear it, ye people, and take it to heart: The true

Christian people, if faithful to their exalted Leader, will take this country, and finally they will appear with Christ and his heavenly host when he shall come in power, with ten thousands of angelic attendants, and with flaming fire, to take vengeance on them that know not God, and are not obedient to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, banishing them from the presence of God, and from the glory of his power, to writhe in eternal pain. This appearing of Christ will be glorious, with all his saints who believed on him, and obediently followed him. Then all the ungodly, and the scorers, shall be like straw for the devouring flames, while the children of God shall appear with him in glory. Then, while ten thousand thunders will be rolling, and the heavens be blazing with forked tongues of lightning; while the plowshare of ruin shall run deep through world on world, and a universal fire shall lick up the waters of the great oceans, then shall the wicked cry, "Ye rocks and mountains fall on us, and cover us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" Then shall the saints shine in the glory of the Son of God, while they shall help to judge the world.

Sinner, hear it! The Son of God, whom you are crucifying, and whose blood you trampled beneath your unholy feet, and the praying followers of

Jesus will, in the last day, meet you in their glory, but "terrible as an army with banners," to drive you into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone! Before this terrible army you will retreat as before a storm of thunderbolts from heaven, to take up your abode where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth. In that day "every eye shall see Him, and they also, which pierced Him, and all kindreds of the earth shall *wail because of Him.*"

Then shall all the children of God rejoice greatly, and the saints of the Most High shall take possession of the kingdom forever and ever. "Songs and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Hallelujah! Amen.

A FRAGMENT OF ANOTHER SERMON.

In Walter's time there was a certain class of persons who, although they were converted, yet were not willing to identify themselves with Christian denominations. They protested against the recording of names in Church books, and against a written Discipline, and called themselves "Independents," "Impartial people," etc. This did not please Walter at all. He delivered a sermon upon this subject, taking for his text Rev. 20. 15: "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire." From these words he showed:

1. That God keeps a record of his spiritual family in a book, called the book of life, and that the names of his children, if they remain faithful, shall not be blotted out of the same.

2. This book is of great importance. It is of greater importance that our names should be found there, than it was for the door-posts of the children of Israel in Egypt to be sprinkled with blood. In their case the death-angel passed by and spared the first born, but whoever has *his name written* in the book of life, is spared from the terrible pit, which burneth with fire and brimstone.

3. Application.—The *Omniscient* even keeps a book in which the names of those who belong to him are recorded, how much more should we *forgetful* preachers also have a book, and have the names of those recorded who are brought to God through our instrumentality, and have committed themselves to our care, and whom we are to build up in their most holy faith! How easily we could forget and neglect one or the other, if we did not have their names on record. I assert that after a person knows that his name is written in heaven, he should also have it recorded upon earth, in a book among the children of God.

#### A SKETCH OF ANOTHER SERMON.

His text was Matt. 7. 15, 19: "Beware of false prophets," etc. His main theme was: The criterions of false prophets. By their *fruit* ye shall



know them. He considered the minister as the trunk, his doctrines the branches, his followers or his membership, who defend him and render obedience to his teachings, as the fruit. When these adherents consist of impenitents, swearers, drunkards, etc., then it is plain that the tree is not good, yea, that both trunk and branches are corrupt. But upon the other hand if his followers are saved men, and lead righteous lives, it is strong evidence that the preacher is a good man, and preaches pure doctrine, for the fruit is good. George Miller heard this sermon, and declared himself well pleased with it.

#### WALTER AT A CAMP-MEETING.

A camp-meeting was held in Union County, Pa. Walter, however, was unable to be present at its beginning. With few exceptions the people were disappointed, and felt discouraged. The meeting was so devoid of spirituality, that some of the members spoke of taking down their tents and returning home. On the third day, at 11 o'clock, Walter entered the preachers' stand. His presence seemed to change the atmosphere, and indications of a change became visible upon the entire campground. Walter was very much fatigued from a long journey, and fell asleep, sleeping until the sermon was finished, when he was called upon to exhort. He arose and rubbed the sleep out of his eyes. As soon as he commenced to speak, the



darkness began to vanish from the congregation, and in a short time sinners cried for mercy, and Christians praised the Lord.

“THIS SPIRIT IS TOO STRONG FOR ME.”

At a camp-meeting held at Turkey Hill, Lancaster County, Pa., a partially insane man named B—. was present. This man was dressed in red, carried a sword, tomahawk, spear and horn, and delighted in creating disturbances in public meetings by his foolish talk, scolding and swearing. At this meeting the “ungodly” were glad for his presence, for they hoped that through this unfortunate man, who seemed to be under the influence of evil spirits, disorder would be created. Walter was just preaching with divine power when B. arrived. He listened a little, was touched, and turned around, saying: “This Spirit is too strong for me,” and quietly left the camp-ground.

“WE SHALL YET POSSESS THE LAND.”

When Walter preached with full liberty at camp-meetings, he often exclaimed, “We shall yet possess the land.” At a camp-meeting, however, held shortly before his death at Jonestown, Lebanon County, Pa., he went still further. After he had described the progress and the spread of revivals in our land, he prophesied that our work would in the future even extend to Europe. This prophecy has been gloriously fulfilled, for which God be greatly praised.

## JOHN WALTER'S TEXTS.

In the German Bible which he used, Walter marked a number of texts, from which he preached. It might be both interesting and profitable for Evangelical ministers to read and consider them. The spirit and drift of his thoughts are thereby clearly brought to light. Two points are prominently set forth by these texts, namely, that Walter searched the Scriptures thoroughly, and chose texts that were profound and full of thought, and that he did not rely upon sketch books. Whoever wishes to become a useful and successful minister, let him go and do likewise. We herewith give a list of the texts, which are worthy of thorough consideration:

## OLD TESTAMENT.

Gen. 3. 9; 24. 49. Ex. 12. 3. Numbers 14. 9; 14. 11, 12; 23. 19. Deut. 15. 9; 16. 18; 27. 17; 27. 26. Josh. 23. 11; 24. 14, 15. Judges 9. 7. 1 Sam. 2. 9-11; 22. 2. 1 Kings 6. 8. 2 Kings 10. 15. 2 Chron. 13. 12; 15. 4; 15. 7; 15. 12-15; 16. 9; 20. 20; 32. 78. Ezra 3. 11-13; 10. 11. Nehemiah 1. 9; 2. 20; 5. 9. Esther 8. 4. Job 7. 10; 27. 11; 28. 28. Psalms 6. 12-15; 29. 10, 11; 37. 37; 37. 39; 85. 10-12; 89. 15-17; 89. 31-34; 92. 14-16; 93. 5; 95. 7-11; 119. 59, 60; 119. 63; 119. 67; 119. 72; 119. 113; 119. 130; 119. 136; 119. 155; 119. 162; 119. 165; 104. 7, 8; 128. 1; 136. 1. Prov. 22. 28; 23. 10, 12; 23. 23. Ecclesiastes 12. 13. Songs of Solomon 1. 4; 1. 6; 1. 12, 13; 2. 3-6; 2. 11, 12; 3. 1-4; 3. 6; 4. 16; 5. 1; 6. 9; 8. 5-7. Isaiah 1. 15; 1. 18-20; 1. 26; 2. 2; 3. 9-11; 24. 5, 6; 31. 1; 32. 20; 33. 13-24; 35. 10; 37. 19; 37. 30; 37. 36; 40. 30, 31; 41. 10; 54. 10; 55. 3; 55. 8-11;

57. 2; 59. 1, 2. Jer. 2. 31; 3. 12, 15; 4. 3, 4; 5. 21, 22; 6. 8; 6. 16; 7. 23, 24; 8. 4, 5; 8. 7; 8. 20; 11. 20; 9. 9; 11. 3; 12. 5; 12. 11; 13. 9; 13. 15-17; 37. 9; 48. 10; 51. 6. Hez. 3. 21; 13. 4, 5; 13. 18, 19; 14. 14. Dan. 4. 34; 12. 3. Hosea 14. 10. Amos 4. 12. Malachi 4. 1, 2.

#### NEW TESTAMENT.

Matth. 5. 20; 6. 33; 7. 13, 14; 10. 37, 38; 13. 4-9; 13. 11; 13. 51; 18. 19; 19. 25; 20. 6; 20. 30-34; 21. 10; 21. 41; 25. 37-40; 25. 46; 26. 41. Luke 11. 28; 11. 35; 11. 40; 18. 26; 19. 10; 19. 27. John 1. 4; 1. 12; 3. 2, 3; 3. 16; 3. 36; 4. 13, 14; 5. 42; 6. 28; 10. 9; 12. 26; 12. 35, 36; 12. 43; 12. 35. Acts 13. 10; 14. 22, 23; 16. 5; 16. 14, 15; 17. 19; 17. 30, 31; 18. 22; 26. 18; 26. 28. Rom. 2. 4-6; 8. 38, 39; 13. 11; 15. 17-19; 15. 29. 1 Cor. 6. 9; 6. 17; 10. 12; 14. 20; 15. 10; 16. 13. 2 Cor. 15, 17; 5. 13, 14; 5. 17; 5. 20; 6. 3-10; 6. 17, 18; 9. 25; 10. 4-6; 10. 12-14; 12. 2; 12. 20; 13. 5; 13. 7, 8; 13. 11. Gal. 2. 17; 5. 1; 5. 22, 23; 6. 7-9; 6. 15, 16. Eph. 2. 5; 2. 8; 3. 13-19; 4. 24; 4. 30; 5. 27; 6. 24. Phil. 2. 12, 13; 4. 4. Col. 1. 21, 23; 2. 9, 10; 3. 12-14. 1 Thess. 1. 5, 6; 2. 3-6; 2. 8; 4. 1. 1 Tim. 2. 4-6; 3. 10; 5. 17; 6. 11, 12. 2 Tim. 2. 15; 2. 19; 3. 12. Titus 2. 14. 1 Pet. 3. 12; 4. 8; 4. 18; 5. 2-5; 5. 8. 2 Pet. 1. 19; 2. 9; 2. 15; 3. 9; 3. 18. 1 John 4. 19; 5. 19. Heb. 3. 7-13; 4. 9; 5. 16; 6. 10-12; 10. 38; 11. 6; 11. 24-27; 12. 15. James 1. 12; 1. 21, 22; 2. 18; 3. 17; 4. 7. Rev. 1. 5, 6; 2. 16, 17; 2. 10; 3. 20; 5. 9, 10; 7. 9, 10; 7. 13-15; 19. 17, 18; 21. 7, 8, 22. 1, 2.

#### FURTHER EXAMPLES OF WALTER'S LABORS.

From reliable sources it is known that Walter labored untiringly for the cause of his Master, in persuading sinners to come to Christ. His addresses were accompanied with such supernatural power, that they could not fail to make

an impression. The power of God rolled over the congregations like the waves of the sea, and sinners and Christians were overwhelmed thereby. A hardened old sinner, who heard of the remarkable sermons of Walter, and the manifestations of divine power, took a terrible oath, that Walter should not make any impressions upon him. With a few of his associates he went to the meeting. Walter commenced in his usual plain and unassuming manner, but being hoarse, with a somewhat indistinct voice. The scoffer turned to his comrades and made sneering remarks about this "powerful" preacher. Walter continued his discourse, his voice becoming clearer as the Spirit led him farther, until it sounded like a trumpet. The congregation was mightily wrought upon, a brother of unquestioned piety was so overwhelmed with divine power that he praised God with a loud voice, and others wept aloud. One of the comrades of this insolent sinner now looked around at him, to see whether he was able still to withstand, and was much surprised to see that he had turned pale and trembled like a leaf. Soon he cried out: "My God, what does this mean!" Walter continued to pour out the truth upon the people, and the Holy Spirit accompanied it in a powerful manner. Suddenly this stiff-necked sinner and two of his comrades fell to the ground, calling upon God for mercy, and ceased not until they found Christ.

## WHAT JOHN BREIDENSTEIN SAYS OF WALTER.

“His labors among his brethren were calculated to lead them into a higher state of grace. He exhorted them to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, and insisted that Christians should follow after holiness, without which no one shall see the Lord. He claimed that there were immeasurable heights, and unfathomable depths, attainable by believers. All his efforts were put forth to lead sinners to Christ, and to persuade Christians to walk in the Spirit, and to attain unto the highest degree of grace attainable in this life. On certain occasions he made special efforts to urge Christians to seek holiness through the prayer of faith, and thus to consecrate themselves unreservedly to the Lord. According to his opinion, holiness consisted in being delivered from all evil affections and desires, and in being conformed to the will of God, so that God is glorified in our bodies and spirits.

“The vacancy caused by the departure of Walter could hardly be filled by another minister of the Evangelical Association.”—This is a strong testimony, but can nevertheless be received with assurance.

## WALTER'S POETICAL TALENTS.

The most surprising characteristic of this remarkable but literally unlearned man, perhaps, is the fact that he was a poet, and furnished a



number of hymns that have taken high rank in the Evangelical Association. And what, perhaps, may be still more remarkable is, that he translated a number of English hymns, which must be acknowledged as a success, notwithstanding the fact that his knowledge of the English language was so limited, that he was compelled first to ask the meaning and definitions of English words. Among his hymns which are still in use, we mention as examples and as original: "*Wer will mit uns nach Zion gehn?*" "*Kommt, Brueder, kommt, wir eilen fort,*" and as translations: "*Mein Gott, du Brunnen aller Freud.*" "*Komm, sehnend Sueder, steh' nun still.*"

In the year 1810 he issued the first hymn-book of the Evangelical Association, with the following title: "A small collection of old and new spiritual hymns, for the use and edification of all who love the Lord. Collected and furnished for the press by John Walter, Minister." This little book contained fifty-six hymns, and did excellent service in its time.

#### WALTER'S FAMILY.

The following was found among the few papers which Walter left: "I, John Walter, entered into the state of holy matrimony with Christiana Becker, at Muehlbach, Heidelberg Township, Dauphin County (now Lebanon), the 8th of August, 1808." (In his 27th year.)



“My daughter Catherine was born May 5th, 1810.”

“My son John was born December 9th, 1812.”

“My son Peter was born May 9th, 1816, and died in the same year on September 7th.”

A FEW LETTERS TO HIS WIFE.

These letters breathe such a pious spirit and Christian matrimonial love, in accordance with Eph. 5. 23–33, that they are worthy of insertion at this place:

“Written June 15, 1809.

“My dear wife, hearty greetings:—May the Lord be your portion, Christ your support, and the Holy Ghost your Comforter and Guide! I would inform you that I reached my circuit in good health, and have met my brethren and sisters, with God’s help and grace, in safety and in the enjoyment of his blessing. We had a blessed time at our extra meeting. Thanks be to God! My prayer and the remembrance of my heart were often for you, my dear wife, that God might also bestow upon you the measure of his grace, and that he might comfort you in all your trials, and deliver you from all temptations and unnecessary cares, that may press your heart and lead from God. Only keep yourself near to God in watchfulness and prayer, then you will find at all times a strong consolation and great peace in God through Jesus Christ for your soul. What we deny our-

selves of in this world for God and the Gospel, and what we suffer for Jesus' sake, God will abundantly recompense with eternal consolation in his kingdom.

“My dear wife, pray earnestly for me and the cause of God. May God be your husband and comforter! I have entrusted you to him in my absence, and I believe that he will provide for and protect you and me. May he keep us unto eternal life! I do not expect to get home until I come to the protracted meeting. But if I live and am well, I will surely come home July 26th or 27th. Again a thousand greetings! Only pray earnestly to God that we may be happy in time and in eternity! My soul pours itself out daily for you in prayer. At the throne of grace you can daily meet me, at least in the morning, at noon, and in the evening, even though we must be separated in body. So much from your loving husband,

JOHN WALTER.”

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“Written January 18, 1813, by your loving husband, John Walter, to you, Christiana, my beloved wife: I most heartily greet you, and wish you many blessings and much grace from God, for body and soul. I am still well and alive. God be praised for it! I hope these lines will find you and the children well also. Keep yourself only to

God in watchfulness and prayer, then he will also stand by you and sweeten all your sorrow. I hope to receive a letter from you soon. I greet you once more most heartily, and commend you and myself to God. Written in haste by your husband,

JOHN WALTER."

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The following letter has no date:

"A hearty greeting to you, my dear wife! May God greet you, Jesus cheer you, and the Holy Spirit comfort you in all sorrow, and guide you into all truth. I will let you know that I am still in good health. As long as God will permit I feel encouraged to continue my labors in his cause. We had glorious seasons at our extra meetings, the work of God seems to prosper, and his children are abundantly blessed. We will be very watchful and prayerful. May God unite us in contending for the faith of the Gospel unto death. Let us make this our chief concern, that we may be able to stand in the great day of eternity, for this world passes away with all that is therein. If we have raiment and food we are rich enough, if we are therewith contented. God will not forsake us, we will trust in him, my dear wife.—Further I will let you know that I will come home November 22,

if the Lord will. You need not be concerned about gathering the corn, I will attend to that when I come home.

From Yours,  
JOHN WALTER."

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If the loving spirit that is perceptible in these letters is as beneficial to the reader as it is to the writer, then it will be like unto pearls from the early days of the Evangelical Association.

A LETTER FROM JOHN ERB TO JOHN WALTER.

The following letter in part shows how the old Evangelical preachers labored in Walter's time. Though the letter is not written by Walter, but was written by Bro. Erb to W., yet it is too valuable to be lost. May it be taken to heart:

Jan. 14th, 1812.

To John Walter.

My dear brother in Christ:—May God be your portion and Christ your support! I will let you know that I am still well, for which God be praised, and I hope these lines will find you all enjoying the same blessing. I herewith inform you that I am still as determined to continue in God's work with soul and body, as I have ever been. And I cannot forbear to write you about the work of God on our circuit. The Lord has done

great things for our circuit, and to him be eternal praise! Many souls have been converted during this year. The fire is burning on the circuit, and we hear the praises of Immanuel in the tents of the righteous. Our friends are in earnest, and continue steadfastly in the work as those who are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Further, I cannot refrain writing what God has wrought at our watch-night meetings.—Eternal praise be to God for his grace! During these meetings fifteen souls were saved. We have received seventy persons into Church fellowship, the most of whom are pardoned, and yet many others are penitent. The deacon in Derrstown was converted, and the whole village is in commotion; God be praised, for he works mightily at all places! O brother, what will God not do for us! Only have strong faith in proclaiming the Gospel, and pray for us. The devil is very angry with us and roars terribly, and his emissaries oppose us as much as possible. They attempt to close up the gap with hypocritical work, but the Lord sends heavy showers, and causes the gaps to become wider than before.

“The persecutors are very furious, they have cut my cloak and saddle into pieces, and try to place many obstacles in the way to check the work of God. But thanks be unto God! He qualifies me only the more with power and faith to carry

on his work! Long ago they have waited for my end, but it seems as though the Lord would again grant unto me good health. Further, I think there will be five brethren that will start out by next Spring to preach the Gospel. God be praised, that he sends us laborers! Further, I salute Bro. Miller and his family, and Bro. Betz, Bro. Jerlitz and all the brethren and sisters. The conference will be held on April 20, at Dreisbach's. The "big meeting" on the 4th of April, is at Meessen's, and on the 11th at Spangler's. I send this letter with Michael Deibler, whom I commend to you in the Lord, to instruct him in the work of God. We desired very much to see Bro. Weber. Our circuit is too large for two to travel, so we wish he would soon come and help us.

Jan. 27, 1812.

"On the 25th the Lord wrought mightily in our midst. Ten souls were converted, and many others are seeking. God be praised for the miracles of his grace! O brother, what will the Lord not do for us! Only continue earnestly in prayer, and have faith in God, and he will do great things for us! Pray for us! Brother Zimmerman and the brothers and sisters salute you.

"From your brother and co-laborer in the Gospel,

JOHN ERB.

In Northumberland County."



## THE LAST YEAR'S LABOR.

In the history of the Evangelical Association, page 110-111, it is reported: "His last circuit was the Schuylkill, or, as it was previously called, the Schuylkill and Lancaster circuit, which was assigned to him and two other brethren as their field of labor by the Conference of April, 1813. During this year he commenced to spit blood, but did not cease from his work until he commenced to bleed violently, and became very sick."

Walter, as well as Albright and others of their co-laborers, not only labored very hard in preaching to crowded congregations, in small rooms of private houses, but as their fields of labor were very extensive, their appointments came so seldom, that the people became very desirous to hear the Word of Life, so they often preached long and loud. Moreover, traveling in those days was no easy task, and being probably not sufficiently protected, they frequently got wet and contracted heavy colds. Their meals were often at irregular hours, and their sleeping accommodations certainly not first class, as a rule, and of recreation they knew nothing. Withal they fasted much and practiced strict self-denial, the result of which was that, notwithstanding their robust constitutions, they broke down very early, which was also the case with Walter. In our day we are not so much in danger from any of these extremes.

## HIS CLOSING YEAR UPON EARTH.

Thus the close of life of this dear man of God gradually approached. From 1813 he was sickly, and never after this was able to travel. Yet he occasionally attended "big meetings" and camp-meetings, and preached with power. At times he was sick enough to be in bed, and at other times he could move around. At the time when he took sick he lived at a place called Schwamm, in West Calico Township, Lancaster County, Pa., where he owned a house and a few acres of land. But afterwards he sold this property and purchased a house and several acres of land in Hanover Township, Lebanon County, Pa., near his friends. He was poor, and at this time unable to support himself, in consequence of which the friends and neighbors at times supplied him with the necessaries of life.

This servant of God had not sought honor of men, much less did he abuse his high calling, the ministry of reconciliation, for the purpose of gaining filthy lucre. With Moses, he looked to the recompense of the reward, which the chief Shepherd shall give to his servants when he comes the second time,—a crown of glory that never fades away. And much less was he a seeker of ease or pleasure. One could hardly think of a life connected with more privations than was Walter's itinerancy. The love of Christ constrained him,

as it had Paul, to consecrate his all, in order **that** he might win precious souls for Christ.

#### HIS LAST WEEKS.

About three weeks before his death Walter was confined to his bed. He was visited much by friends and the children of God, with whom he enjoyed many happy hours upon his couch. He imparted much good spiritual advice whilst suffering upon his death bed. Among others, John Breidenstein and David Thomas visited him also, to whom he said that young ministers should not select difficult texts at first, but should choose such as, for instance, Rev. 3. 20, "Behold I stand at the door and knock," etc. He expressed a peculiar opinion about the word "Abendmahl" \* (sup) in the text, viz.: Since these words are found in the writings to the lukewarm society of Laodicea, and served as a last warning to them, it being, as it were, *evening* with them. Thus we may consider it is in general with those who are not saved until shortly before death. But whosoever permits the Saviour to come in, in early life, or at noon, with such he will keep the "Morgen" and also the "Mittagsmahl." (Sup with him in the morning and at noon.) John Dreisbach also visited Walter shortly before his death, and found him happy, in

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\*) The force lies in the German Scripture passage.

full hope of eternal life. The class at Linglestown, Dauphin County, Pa., paid him a visit also, and besought him for a few parting words. Weak as he was, he sat up in bed and commenced a farewell address. But soon the power of God came upon him in such a measure, that he spoke with a loud voice. But now he hastened rapidly towards his end. During his final farewell he said: "I know that my Redeemer liveth!"—and exhorted his wife and his relatives that they should not weep for him, since he would now pass from all sufferings into eternal joy.

Thus this righteous man died in the Lord, on December 3d, 1818, and his works do follow him, and he is permitted to eat the fruit of them with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and his co-laborers, who together praise God in the kingdom of glory. His age was 37 years, 3 months and 6 days. Bro. David Thomas preached the funeral sermon to a large concourse of people, from Heb. 13. 17: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for this *is* unprofitable for you."

Walter served the Church of his choice nearly twelve years as an itinerant preacher, and was the instrument of leading many to repentance, and in building up believers in holiness. He was gener-

ally beloved and highly respected by intelligent Christians, as well as by respectable non-professors. The aged fathers and mothers in Israel, yet spared among us, who knew him and heard him, even after the lapse of so many years, speak of him with joyful and thankful remembrance. "The memory of the just is blessed."



LIFE, EXPERIENCE,  
AND  
MINISTERIAL LABORS  
OF  
GEORGE MILLER,  
EVANGELICAL PREACHER.



"A GOOD MINISTER OF JESUS CHRIST."—1 Tim. 4. 6.







## PREFACE.

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GEORGE MILLER wrote a short history of his own life and experience, which was examined and approved by a Conference Committee, therefore I regarded it neither desirable nor just to make many changes. But since the style of composition is antiquated, a few changes, here and there, were considered necessary; pains were taken, however, not to destroy its characteristic simplicity and vigor. Occasionally, where I thought it needful and useful, foot-notes have been added. May the whole prove a great blessing to the reader !

R. Y.

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LIFE AND LABORS  
OF  
GEORGE MILLER.

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PART FIRST.

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*Miller's Birth. — Education up to his Nineteenth Year. — Condition Before his Conversion. — Conversation with Awakened Persons. — Acquaintance with Jacob Albright. — Awakening and Conversion.*

I, GEORGE MILLER, was born February 16th, in the year of our Lord, 1774, in Pottstown, Montgomery County, State of Pennsylvania. My parents were Jacob and Elizabeth Miller. Soon after my birth they moved to Alsace Township, Berks County, where my father died when I was eleven years old. Up to my nineteenth year we were under the care of our mother; then I began to learn a trade. I received a limited education in the German language, and was instructed in the principles of the Christian religion, in accordance with the custom of the Lutheran Church. My parents kept me under good discipline, and would not allow me

under any pretence to indulge in vice, but pointed out to me the terrible consequences of profanity; so that an aversion to such abominations was early implanted within me, and I was kept from committing such sins, and felt grieved when they were committed by others. But, nevertheless, my heart was wicked, and I often felt a desire for license to gratify its evil desires. I had no inclination to indulge in vice, but sought for gratification in what I considered things of little account. But, alas! I was very much deceived by my own heart, for soon after the death of my father, my self-will asserted itself in disobedience toward my mother, so that all her corrections seemed to leave no impression upon my mind. I yielded to much that was sinful, sinning against my own conscience, which frequently accused and reproved me.

I would have entirely forgotten the good training of my father, if the Lord had not reminded me of it through a severe illness, during my twelfth and thirteenth years. Violent pain in my limbs, accompanied with swelling of the knees, frequently disabling me entirely, produced fears that I might become a cripple, which had the effect of humbling me more than all preceding exhortations. I was now compelled to remain at home on the Sabbath, and to obey my mother. During this time I often read the Scriptures aloud to her, which seemed to give her much pleasure.

About this time I had succeeded in saving two dollars, for which my mother intended to purchase a sheep, and to allow me to have the profits it might yield in the shape of wool, etc. At first I entertained the proposition favorably, but afterwards I changed my mind, and expressed the desire that she should buy a Bible for me. This pleased mother very much, and she purchased a beautifully bound Bible with the money. I found much pleasure in reading the good book, so that at the end of eighteen months I had read it through. While thus engaged God wrought deep impressions upon my heart, and the light and knowledge received from the Word made a sinful life appear exceedingly sinful, and, on the other hand, a life of godliness seemed pleasant and blessed, so that I heartily desired to become pious. While reading the repeated declarations: "The Lord spake to Moses and Aaron, saying, Speak ye with the children of Israel, saying," etc., the words became such a living message to my soul as if they had been spoken to me personally. This awakened still greater interest and also a longing desire to understand and comprehend what I read. A dream was made the means of partly gratifying this desire. I dreamed I was in company with Moses and Aaron, while the Lord came from heaven to speak to them. I could hear the voice, but could not understand what was said. I was



also permitted to look upon Him, but He was surrounded by such a glorious light that I could form no proper conception of His appearance. His presence was delightful and His voice sweet and charming, so that I felt sorry that He did not remain longer. I was just about to inquire of Moses and Aaron what the Lord had said, as I had no doubt they had understood his voice, when I awoke.

This dream led me to think of my sinful state, and also more earnestly to study the Scriptures. I became impressed that the glorious person I had seen must have been the Lord Jesus Christ, and his gracious words the Holy Scriptures which, however, I did not understand, although I heartily desired to know them. I believed if I would search the Scriptures I could be instructed how to know Christ, and hoped if I would meditate upon the Word, accompanied with prayer and supplication, the Lord would speak graciously to me and reveal himself gloriously unto me. These things produced great regard in my mind for the Holy Scriptures and the Word preached by God's servants, so that reading and hearing the Word was pleasant as well as edifying, and my faith, that the Bible was the Word of God, was confirmed. My leisure hours were frequently spent in reading the Bible to refresh my soul.

In my sixteenth year I attended the catechetical instructions of a Lutheran minister in Reading, Pa.

The arrangements of the law under the Mosaic dispensation; the ceremonial worship of the Israelites being only types and shadows pointing to Christ, and fulfilled in him; and the fact that the moral law was still binding upon Christians, interested me very much. I became very anxious to know how I might keep the law of God perfectly, but could not learn this from the instructions of my teacher. He told us much about faith, but I doubted very much whether he had ever experienced the power of saving faith in his own soul. He told us to believe that our sins were pardoned, but I could not find rest, as I wanted the assurance that I had received the remission of my sins, for I knew that must accompany true faith, through which the world, the flesh and the devil could be overcome; but how to receive and exercise such faith was incomprehensible to my mind. By the study of God's Word I had received sufficient light to know that I must repent, that there must be a godly sorrow on account of sin, and that I must earnestly call upon God for pardon; that I must be ready, for Christ's sake and the sake of the Gospel, to bear reproach and suffer persecution. But I had never seen any one praying upon bended knees, and besides I was held back by a man-fearing spirit. Finally I decided to become a Christian, but I would keep it a secret! However, to my sorrow, I did not succeed very well in my purpose.

My condition became so deplorable that I hardly knew where to turn in my grief; still, I hoped I would find pardon and the assurance of the grace of God at the time of my confirmation; however, this also passed by, and I was not saved! I received the Lord's Supper, and thought I believed the words spoken, namely, that the blood of Christ was shed "for the remission of sins;" but still I found no peace, my sad condition continued, and I returned to my home in sorrow.

The following day I was still discussing the question in my mind, What must I do to be saved? I finally resolved to go to some secluded spot in the woods and kneel down and ask God for pardon. However, when I reached the place, I began to discuss the question with myself, whether I should kneel down or not. I was afraid lest some one might see me and laugh at me. I began to meditate upon the instructions I had received from the minister, and at last resolved to abide by what I had been told, and should I be lost, the responsibility would rest with him, but hoped that not all would be lost who did not pray upon their knees, and had not experienced a change of heart.

From this time on I lost all inclination toward religion, and my love for Bible-reading finally vanished altogether, so that I not only lost all desire to become pious, but yielded to one sin after another, until I became a leader in all manner of

wickedness, inciting others to sin also. An awakened conscience, frequently alarming and terrifying me, I attempted to quiet by plunging into still deeper depths of iniquity. I had become so polluted and ruined by sin, that I became an abomination both to God and man. I realized that I had provoked the wrath of God, and that my sins justly merited eternal damnation. During heavy thunderstorms I became fearfully alarmed, often afraid the next thunderbolt might strike me down to hell. Several times my life was endangered. Once, while carelessly bathing in the Schuylkill river, I came very nearly being drowned. In my fright I called out, "I am lost!" I suffered so much from fear that I really became sick. On several occasions I sustained heavy falls from buildings and trees. I also suffered much on account of frightful dreams, so that I was in almost constant misery. What wretchedness! I had no peace with God, and had lost favor with men.

In my nineteenth year I went to live with my brother John and a man by the name of Conrad Dunkel, to learn the trade of a millwright. Fortunately Mr. Dunkel was an honorable, well-behaved, and industrious single young man. His exemplary conduct put me to shame, and made deep impressions upon my mind, so that I resolved to reform my silly and dissolute life. Through industry and obedience I soon gained his esteem.

Possessing some natural mechanical talent, and having been in and around grist mills from my youth, as I had worked in my father's mill, I soon became master of my trade. My masters, who had taken much pains with me, also assisted me in obtaining work after my apprenticeship had been served, as they seemed to delight in my welfare, and were always ready to assist me when I needed help.

I now began to mature plans how I might make an honest living. I had also regained the confidence and esteem of honorable men, who aided me by their counsel; although I was still a slave to many treacherous sins. Divine providence, however, seemed to lead me, so that I became more moral. Although my former sins and the reproofs of Mr. Dunkel had greatly humbled me, yet the following occurrence seemed to have the greatest effect upon me: While I was serving my apprenticeship my father's mill had been rented. The miller employed several coopers, who made flour barrels in the mill. Through their carelessness the shavings took fire, and the mill with its entire contents became a prey to the flames. I was just on my way home to visit my mother, and not very far from the mill, when I saw the smoke ascending. By the time I reached the mill the entire building was enveloped in flames. When my father built the mill he had a stone with the following inscrip-



tion put into the wall above the door: "God can build and can destroy, he can give, and he can take away, even as it seemeth good in his sight." These words, through the Spirit of God, penetrated my soul, so that I cried out: "This is true, God can give and take away." I acknowledged the righteousness of God in allowing this misfortune to befall us, and felt that we had deserved even greater punishment. I now again formed the resolution to change my life, and also aided in rebuilding the mill. By the help of God and the kind aid of our neighbors, it was completed within four months, and thus the inscription "God can build," was also verified. The Lord influenced the hearts of the people that they came to our help, and in this way were enabled to complete the work. These things induced me to form a resolution always to remember those who were in want.

About this time I heard of a certain class of people who were very much persecuted on account of their religious worship. The reports concerning these people were very contradictory, so that I felt a desire to become acquainted with them, and finally found opportunity to do so. Some I found still clinging to their old Church customs, while others would have nothing whatever to do with them. I inquired, why they were called such odious names. They replied, because they had forsaken sin and made a profession of experimental



religion they were being persecuted. I conversed with some, and although they were awakened, and held that men must be born again, and have the assurance of their acceptance with God, in order to be at peace; still I could not receive clear and intelligent views during my conversations with them; however, I entertained great respect for them, as I could feel free to open my heart to them.

One evening, while G. R—— and I were speaking about religion, I proposed we would kneel down and pray to God for his grace. While I spoke I felt so strong that the words seemed to enter our souls with much force. But I noticed that my friend felt ashamed of me and left the room. I also began to feel ashamed of my proposition, and immediately the Spirit left me. Afterwards I hardly ventured to reveal the condition of my soul to any one. However, on meeting a Reformed minister, whom I regarded as a pious man, I ventured to speak to him. He endeavored to comfort me by saying my condition was not as bad as I thought, the only obstacle apparently being a doubt as to my election. But I told him that that was not my trouble; that I never doubted that all who would fully consecrate themselves to God would be accepted by him; but that I had no clear views as to how to give myself fully into the Lord's hands. I told him I had forsaken

sin, but still my heart was unrenewed, and I knew unless I experienced genuine conversion I could not be saved. He gave me a curt reply. It seemed to me that he either was confused or afraid, at least he never visited me again, although I urgently invited him to come. Even some awakened persons tried to persuade me that my spiritual condition was right, as I had ceased from flagrant transgressions; however, the Spirit of God would not allow me to confide in these false assurances of peace. I also had the privilege of reading good religious books, among which was Joseph Alleine's *Foundation of True Christianity*.

In my worldly matters I had great success, for in a few years I had already saved over a thousand dollars. During this time I also had many internal calls to conversion, and regarded it as remarkable that God permitted everything to prosper in my hands. I was convinced that I must finally give a strict account if I did not turn to the Lord. Through my business I became acquainted with many wealthy and influential people, who spared no means to instruct me in the customs and modes of the higher worldly circles, and if I had not withdrawn myself from them, I soon would have become a Free-Thinker, for their associations gave me more pleasure and satisfaction than all the usual church customs of worldly churches, and it is no wonder that many have fallen into

Deism and Atheism, and have no love for the Christian religion, because many so-called Christian people are really wicked.

In consequence of these things I had severe conflicts, for when I read the Bible, especially about the sufferings of Christ, I was overflowing with blasphemous thoughts, as though it was not true what was recorded there, so that I once arose from my chair with the Bible in my hand, and fell upon my knees and cried out: "O Lord, let me not become a Deist! Oh, take these blasphemous thoughts from me, and I will be converted!"

In the year 1798 I bought a tract of land in Brunswick Township, Schuylkill County, Pa., where I built a mill, and I made up my mind that, when my mill was finished, I would quit building mills, and engage in milling and seek God with all my heart. And as in all this everything went according to my wishes, and the mill was in full running order, the Lord reminded me of my vow, and I became obedient, for I now commenced to pray in my closet, to weep over my sins and read the Holy Scriptures upon my knees. In this penitent condition Providence ordered it so, that I met the Evangelical preacher Jacob Albright, and heard him preach. His modest demeanor, his pious, cheerful countenance, which seemed to glow with love to God and man, and his mild yet earnest and penetrating look with which he gazed

upon the people, at once disarmed my former prejudices, producing admiration for the man, and a desire to hear him preach. He preached from the words: "*Behold, I place before you the way of life and the way of death.*"—Jer. 21. 8. I was touched in such a manner through his powerful sermon that if I had not taken hold of a table, I should have sunk to the floor. After the sermon I conversed with him; his exhortation was short, but solemn, for he said: "You must pray earnestly, humble yourself, willingly take upon you the cross of Christ and believe with all your heart, and you will soon find peace." The following day I accompanied him to his next appointment, and heard him preach the second time; and when we parted I requested him to pray for me.

I had now fully resolved to choose the way of life, but still for three long years I continued in this penitent and sorrowing condition, always being kept back by unbelief and presumption, yet finally was able to believe, and received the pardon of my sins.

In the year of our Lord, 1800, I was married to Magdalena Brobst. Two years later I built a house near my mill, and we moved into it. At this time my mind was entirely engrossed with family and business cares, but the Lord, still mindful of me, sent his servant, Jacob Albright, to my house, who asked for a night's lodging. I was

very glad to see him and received him cordially. I asked him many questions, being anxious about many things, but he gave me very brief answers. However, he prayed with me and my family so powerfully that I was moved to tears, and he improved the opportunity to point out the necessity of a genuine conversion to God. The next day I went with him to his appointment at the house of Leonard Zimmerman, *sen.* On the way I told him that for several years I had been penitent, but had been seeking in vain; that I had not yet experienced pardon for sin, and had no assurance of my acceptance with God. He then told me that I must submit myself wholly to God, believe on him and trust his grace, and be willing to bear his cross and reproach with the people of God, even though every one should be against me; for unless I separated myself from all sin, came out from the world, and became obedient to God with all my heart, and willing to live for him, and serve him alone, I might yet repent for many years and at last be rejected and condemned by God for disobedience. We arrived at the place of the appointment. Albright preached powerfully and with great liberty, so that I was fully convinced that no person could do so without the grace of God assisting him. Powerfully affected by this sermon, I firmly resolved from this time on to work out my salvation, and requested



Albright to preach also in my house the Gospel of a crucified Christ, which he immediately promised, and appointed a time when he would come. In the meantime I prayed a great deal, beseeching God in my closet for the forgiveness of my sins. The grief of my soul was so great that I had the appearance of being sick, nothing in the world affording me any pleasure; I only had hungering and thirsting for the grace of God in the pardon of my sins. After spending several years in this miserable condition under a load of guilt, it pleased a gracious and merciful God to deliver me from my sad estate. On the 3d of June, 1802, I wept and prayed all day while engaged at my work, walking back and forth in my mill, frequently falling upon my knees in prayer, calling upon God for help, and vowed to serve him only, whatever might be the consequences. As I thus gave myself entirely to God, through faith, to serve him alone, I was permitted in the evening to have a glimpse of the saving mercy of his grace. By faith I saw God looking upon me, and while beholding his gracious countenance a stream of his love flowed into my soul, and I was certain that God was surely my friend, and I his accepted child. Yea, I was so quickened by the reception of His grace, and pervaded with such peaceful, sweet and happy emotions, that I could not keep from praising my Redeemer for his great mercy and love.



That night I could sleep without any cares, joyfully resting in Christ. The following morning there was a great change indeed. The heavens and the earth seemed new. The Scriptures had become a divinely quickening power, yea, to me all things appeared as if they increased my happiness, for God had become my friend. Glory be to God on high for his love and mercy. \*

Notwithstanding God had done such great things for me, still I was too timid to make a public profession of my experience. One reason was, that I was afraid it might be considered as being audacious and egotistical, and another because I thought one who had been so great a sinner as I, ought not to be so bold. But through this ignorance I became subject to many doubts and fears, lost the power to pray with my family publicly, became discouraged, timid and unable trustfully to say: Abba, Father, although I still continued to pray in my closet. My wife had also become concerned

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\* This was an Evangelical conversion, and certainly also truly Scriptural. A thorough knowledge of sin, godly sorrow on account of sin, and separation from sin, and repentance which ended in the victory of faith in Christ, and the witness of the Holy Spirit unto adoption. Thus the foundation unto holiness, steadfastness, and triumph in death was clearly and firmly laid. In the primitive days of the Evangelical Association no one was satisfied simply with mere *hoping* and uncertain *feeling*, but each one wished to say with Paul: "I tell the truth and lie not; this testimony my conscience gives me through the Holy Ghost." The assurance of faith was one of the leading features of the preaching of the fathers. [R. Y.]

about her soul, and noticed my difficulties. We often knelt together, but each was ashamed of the other to offer an audible prayer. However, at a big meeting, held at the house of Jacob Philipps, I was delivered from this snare.

I suffered but little persecution at this time. A few persons, to whom my conduct seemed strange, ridiculed me on account of it. And, although Albright had been preaching in my house for some time, I nevertheless passed as a good Churchman among my neighbors, and they were still inclined to be on good terms with me, as they indulged the hope I would soon learn to know Albright, and then dismiss him. But thanks be unto God that he led me to become acquainted with this man, who was so bitterly hated by evil-doers; yea, blessed be the name of the Lord that I learned to know myself and my God through the labors and teachings of this man of God. Albright had invited me and my brother Solomon to come to the meeting at Philipps', and we concluded to accept the invitation; we had, however, agreed to ask God for wisdom and help, that if we should discover anything unclean and impure among these people, God should preserve us from becoming contaminated with it.

The day before we started I had a very severe trial: I was mowing buckwheat, and became impressed I should not attend this meeting. I

knelt down several times and asked God with tears to direct me, and each time I felt as if I ought to go. Finally the conflict in my mind ceased, and I became calm, and was enabled to rest in the Lord, and resolved to go, because I began to feel as if the devil was trying to keep me away from the meeting. The next morning when I met my brother I told him about my conflicts, and he replied that he had experienced similar temptations. We then journeyed to the place of the meeting cheerfully and joyfully, and arrived there in the evening. A young man named John Walter preached. I listened very attentively to the Word. He preached with great zeal and power. There was a deep feeling in the congregation, and occasionally a loud groan was heard. A kind of fear came over me, but I continued praying to God, and I felt convinced that God was with these people. But my confidence very soon left me, for after the sermon was over, they commenced to sing with great earnestness and joy, and then all prayed at once with great vehemence, becoming louder and louder, until there was a great noise, which could be heard at quite a distance. The most repulsive to me, however, was that some sprang upon their feet, and shouted and praised God so loud that it made my ears tingle. After observing this agitation, I was inclined to think that such confusion could not be the work of the

Holy Ghost; still I prayed to God that he might mercifully direct me. I knew very well that living in sin was not right; I felt that I was not right myself, and according to my opinion these praying people were not right either! Well, thought I, God certainly is right, and him who seeks the Lord with all his heart he will lead aright, so I will call upon God, and he will guide me aright. If others should not be upright before him, I will still try to serve God with all my heart; I will not stray from the truth. O my God, make me right! While I thus resolved, and continued earnestly in prayer, I experienced the love of God shed abroad in my heart similar to my first experience in the mill, only with greater power and in a much larger measure. I raised up my head and cried out: "The Lord is my friend." After I had said this, I was lifted up by the power of God, not being able to restrain myself, but sprang to my feet and praised God with a loud voice. But I noticed that several of those who professed to be converted smiled, and this again caused me a struggle, so I fell upon my knees, again calling mightily upon God, and now I was so filled with the love of God, that I could not restrain myself, but rejoiced with great joy. I afterwards discovered that the friends smiled because they also rejoiced that I had received such a great blessing. My brother Solomon was also

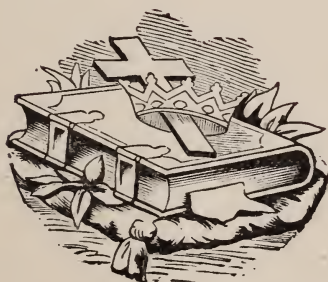
blessed at this meeting, and thus, like the Eunuch, we returned to our homes rejoicing. I now commenced to have worship in my family, although in great weakness, yet the Lord increased my faith and strength day by day.

My brother and I frequently visited each other and prayed together. My brother's wife also was soon afterwards converted to God, which gave us much encouragement and joy. My wife, however, seemed to be more confirmed in her views and unwilling to accept my explanation of the Scriptures as being correct. Her parents also were like-minded. This caused me considerable grief, yet I was determined to remain firm. The moral persons I spoke of above, also fully expressed themselves in reference to our conduct, and seemed concerned, lest we might become spiritually proud. They said that others before us had acted in the same way, but had not held out. Still these things did not move me, but only served as a warning not to receive the grace of God in vain, and I called upon God for persevering grace and an increase of faith, that I might endure unto the end; for already the spirit of persecution was alive in our neighborhood.

In the year 1803, on Easter, a "big meeting" was held at the house of my brother. Albright preached with such power and effect that some of his hearers became alarmed and fled from the meeting, but were converted upon reaching their



homes. Others, who remained, cried out for mercy and pardon, among whom were also my wife and several of her sisters. I now received new strength and courage, was filled with fervent love to God and man, my delight being in the Lord, whose grace and mercy I freely confessed before the world, giving him all glory and praise.





PART SECOND.

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*Miller is Appointed Class-Leader.—Starts out as an Itinerant Minister, and his Severe Trials.—A Great Revival in Buffalo, Penn and Moser's Valleys, etc.*

SINCE God thus' blessed the preached Word in our neighborhood, so that a number of persons were led to Christ, and were now determined, by the grace of God, to save their souls, we united ourselves into a society or class, in order to remind each other of our duties, to watch over each other in love and to pray for each other, and thus unitedly to work out our soul's salvation. Bro. Albright appointed me as leader of the class, to fix the time and place for public prayer, and to admonish, instruct, encourage, comfort or reprove, as circumstances might require. To this Union were added a number of persons who were earnestly seeking Christ. The office of watching over the souls of the members of the class, caused me many severe trials. When I was to deliver the first public exhortation to them, I could speak but a few words on account of my timidity. I felt very much humiliated, and called the more earnestly upon God, both publicly and privately, for the necessary qualifications to become useful among

the flock. The Lord answered my prayer, and became strength in my weakness, so that I was very soon enabled to speak with considerable boldness and liberty to the honor of God and the edification of the class and the people. I partook of the fruits in my own soul; my brethren were strengthened and praised God, and some were brought to repentance and conversion, while others mocked and opposed the truth.

Persecution now commenced in earnest. Having separated myself from all sin, and warned my neighbors on account of it, I encountered opposition and incurred their displeasure, especially as I had united with the people who were so bitterly hated by the ungodly. An ungodly minister tried to persuade his congregation to disturb the meetings held in my house, threatening to resign if this was not done. This false teacher soon afterwards entered upon his reward. Another unconverted preacher one Sabbath came with about thirty of his members to my house, in order to convince me of the error of my ways, and, as he said, to persuade me to desist from continuing therein. But, perceiving that his flattery did not accomplish its desired purpose, he became very angry and began to scold, and finally rushed out of the house in his wrath, so that his companions were heartily ashamed of him. Several of them, however, afterwards wreaked their vengeance upon me by break-

ing my windows, stopping the water passage of my mill, and committing other fiendish deeds. I was also notified not to cross some land belonging to the church property, although a public road passed over it leading to one of my fields. I nevertheless ventured to cross over it, and the schoolmaster threw clubs and stones at me, but he also soon afterwards passed into eternity. Some withdrew their custom from my mill; my creditors pressed me sorely, while my debtors purposely neglected to settle their accounts. Several times I was maltreated, the officers of the law refusing to punish the offenders. At an evening meeting, held in my house, Albright was fiercely abused by a young man. As kind words were unavailing, I tried to eject him from the house, but his companions dragged me along outdoors, where they fell upon me like a pack of wolves upon a sheep. Stones and clubs came now flying from all directions, and one screamed here and another there: "Strike him! Strike him!" But I received only slight blows, and all their strength could not keep me down; for I became so strong, that I could throw them down to my right and left like little children, and pressed back towards the door, where I was seized by my brethren and brought back into the house without being hurt much. As soon as the door was closed, stones were thrown against it with great force. Thanks be unto God,

who saved me from the lion's jaws. I proceeded against the offenders, but even the Justice of the Peace sided with the ruffians, and so they escaped punishment. However, I was vindicated after all, and the right triumphed. The young man referred to had stolen some money, and was compelled to flee the country, while the Justice of the Peace was proven to be incompetent, and removed from office, and soon after left the neighborhood.

Persecution now ran high, but the grace of God was sufficient. My nearest relatives frequently were my greatest persecutors. My father-in-law made a strong effort to break up the meetings held at the house of my brother Solomon. At one time he came intending to frighten Albright and the others who were present; he rushed madly upstairs, where several sisters were engaged in secret prayer, and, drawing a cane-sword, he breathed out fearful threatenings. However, Sister Magdalena Walter courageously walked up to him, saying they were neither afraid of him nor of his sword, but she would serve and praise God, and, if need be, was even ready to die for Christ! We all called so mightily upon God for help, that the man became so confused and disconcerted that he left the house, and afterwards confessed that on his way home he got off his horse and wept and prayed. The conduct of this man caused me the severest trials that I ever had, for I knew his pre-

sumption; yet even this, as all other temptations, worked together for my good. For under trials I was to learn humility, gentleness and patience, as also how to deny myself.

I now sold my land and mill, and wanted to move to Buffalo Valley, but afterwards bought land in Albany, Berks County, Pa., which I had rented before. Here I again plunged into business, and would soon have become involved in worldly matters (by means of which Satan has already dragged many to hell), if I had not resolved to forsake all for Jesus and the Gospel, and to start out as an itinerant preacher, for the salvation of my fellow men lay very near my heart. I therefore rented my house, and in four weeks was ready to travel.

I was now like a bird that had escaped the snare of the fowler; still, I had many things to contend with. My relatives and friends offered many carnal objections against my entering the itinerancy: how I would lose temporally, that a man must also care for his family, and what an advantage it was to possess some means, etc. They spoke as if my family was already in want, and as if God either could not or would not care for his own. But I would not allow them to discourage me, and with Job despised my false friends, putting my trust in God, willing rather to lose all my temporal possessions than to displease him. I



consecrated my all to the Lord in all confidence, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of my faith, who was rich, but became poor that we, through His poverty, might become rich.

In April, 1805, I started as an itinerant under charge of Jacob Albright and John Walter. At first I was not so clear in my own mind in reference to my call to the ministry, although I was ready to say to the Lord with Isaiah: "Here am I, send me;" and although I had long since felt an inclination to preach the Gospel, from which I might have drawn the conclusion that I was called, like Jeremiah, from my mother's womb, yet this did not and could not satisfy me. I was considerably perplexed. With Paul, I did not wish to run uncertainly, and yet I could find rest in no other way. How many rush into the office of the ministry, whose only object is the applause of men, the accumulation of wealth, and an easy life, although God has only promised a sufficiency for our needs! However, before a year had elapsed, all doubt respecting my call was at an end, as well through internal as external evidence; for more than one hundred souls had been saved through my weak efforts, and my conceptions of the Scriptures, which were very indistinct at first, became clearer and clearer through the illumination of the Spirit, so that I could testify to the truth with greater clearness and faith; and though



the Word proved "a stumbling block to the Jews, and foolishness to the Greeks," yet to those who believed it was "divine wisdom and power unto salvation."—God be praised that he did not suffer me to run with uncertainty, but confirmed my calling! Yes, praise to his holy name, that although he sent me forth before I could fully understand his will, while suffering reproach and shame, I became confirmed that *this way* was especially well pleasing to him, that is, that I had united with those who were chosen of God, although hated by a wicked world, *to build up a Church in the love and knowledge of God*; a work which, in view of the many and great obstacles, seemed almost impossible to ourselves and others. Some Christian denominations condemned our work as presumptuous, and in the eyes of the world it seemed ridiculous. But that God, who without the help of man's wisdom and strength, stretched forth the heavens, knew how to carry on his work gloriously and rapidly through the power of his Word. Glory be to His excellent name! I spent four entire years in the itinerancy, with the exception of a very short time I needed to arrange my temporal affairs.

In company with Albright I traveled in sections of country entirely unknown to me. After thus traveling together for ten days, we were compelled to separate, and I went on alone in search of new

appointments. I traveled through Dauphin and Lancaster Counties, praying in secret that God might give me souls, several times not knowing where to find a night's lodging. One night I was received nowhere, and was compelled to let my hungry horse run into a field, and take my saddle for a bed.

Once I stopped with a man by the name of Lescher, in Lancaster County, where I was kindly received. In the evening and morning I prayed with the family, and as I bade him adieu, he asked me whether I was a Methodist preacher. I told him I was no Methodist. "But you are a preacher," he said, "and to what denomination do you belong?" "I am an Evangelical," I answered him, "and preach the Gospel to all men who will receive and hear me." "Tell me the truth, are you not a Methodist?" he continued. I answered, "You can depend upon it." "Well, then, I would like to hear you preach, but Methodists I will not receive, for they scream too loud, but perhaps you preach so loud too? But I will announce a meeting for you, then we can hear," etc.

A meeting was appointed, the house was full of people, and the Lord gave me grace to preach the Word among them with feeling and solemnity, so that nearly all were affected. Lescher requested a meeting the second time, and when I had preached there again, others requested it also, and

in a short time sinners cried to the Lord for salvation. When Lescher heard the noise he left the meeting. God, however, worked mightily, so that many turned to the Lord, and afterwards this old man, and nearly his entire family, were also converted to God.

Near Jonestown, in Dauphin Co. (now Lebanon), many were saved and a class organized. In Fishing Creek Valley the Lord also revived his work. I likewise preached near Linglestown, though not with much success. The mother of the family in whose house the services were held, opposed the truth, doing all she could to prejudice others, so I discontinued the appointment. At Michael Becker's I also organized a class, to which some others were added by subsequent conversions. At Hummelstown I preached in the house of a wealthy man, but here the wife also opposed the truth of the Gospel of God. I also preached at the house of W. Schuy, where God graciously revived his work. At this place I once asked for some water to wash my feet, but the good sister insisted upon washing my feet, and would not be refused. This I think is the proper way to practice feet-washing—wash them for each other, when it is necessary, and thus imitate the example of Christ. This sister soon afterwards was called to her eternal reward.

In Sherken's meeting-house I had little success. The man with whom I lodged had a large bank

barn full of fodder, and yet my horse was allowed to suffer, and was hitched under the shed in the front of the barn!

I preached in the houses of a few families near Lebanon, but I had no revival. Here I visited a wealthy man, who was prostrated by sickness, but I found him in a miserably forsaken condition, for I expected that impurity and vermin would soon devour him. I thought, if this man was poor in worldly possessions, perhaps after all the dogs might come and lick his sores, but he had raised his family in avarice, even the servant-girl not excepted, and other friends did not care to come to his help now, and if they had done it, ingratitude would have been their reward. Hence, this passage of warning to the rich is fulfilled, namely: \* “*The rich must perish and hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.*”—Psa. 34. 10.

In the borough of Lebanon I preached in the market-place, at the time when the annual fair was held. I stepped upon the floor of a well and cried out with a loud voice: “Ye men and people of this place, come here and listen to me, I, too, have something to offer for sale!” I did not call oftener than two or three times, until a whole

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\*) This passage reads in the English version: The young lions do lack, etc.

crowd of persons surrounded me and cried out: "Here! here is a prophet!" but saying at the same time: "Be quiet, that we may hear what he has to say!" I told them they should hear me first, and ridicule me afterwards. Meanwhile I opened my Bible and asked whether they knew what was meant by these words: "*My house shall be called a house of prayer, but ye have turned it into a den of thieves.*"—Matt. 12. 11. At the beginning I did not know myself what suitable application to make of the text under the circumstances; but God led me so, that I could show clearly, first, the fall of man, and then the decline of the Church, and with marked power I reproved sin and wickedness, exhorting them to true evangelical repentance, and faith in Christ, who was willing and able to purify the temple of their bodies, houses and Churches, and convert them into houses of prayer. The power of God came upon me in such a measure, that my voice became as piercing as a sword, and in consequence brought silence and attention among those present. The delusion to see and hear a fool, had left them, and they were now thinking quite differently. Some of them had stripped and pushed into the crowd to fight, but left utterly ashamed of themselves. Others wanted to pump water from the well upon which I stood, but could not until I had closed. No one scoffed, not even derisive looks could be



seen upon their countenances, but they made plenty of room for me, moving quietly and gently out of the way. Afterwards I learned that much good was wrought through that sermon; many of the hearers returned home immediately, and several of them were converted to God.

During this year I also preached in Berks County, and most of the time I realized great joy in the Lord, and with my brethren praised and glorified God. Vain, worldly-minded people hated and persecuted me, and I even met with considerable opposition from among professors who could not rejoice in the truth, but became displeased when it was preached. How gladly I would have instructed them in the way of salvation had they only been willing to receive instruction. This often troubled me and disturbed my mind, and I asked myself whether, perhaps, I was not to blame that so many professors of religion became offended at my preaching? I knew very well that the Pharisees and the Jews were offended at Christ and his apostles, and that these same persons took offence also at Albright and other servants of God. But this could not satisfy me, until I knew of a certainty that it was pleasing to God to preach as I did. On this account I prayed often, yea, even with tears, that God might forbid that I should be a detriment to any one through my preaching, and that if my method did not please him, he would



lead me differently. But the more I prayed, and the more fully I gave myself to God, the more penetrating and searching my sermons became, so that some would leave during the services, and others would take still greater offence.\*

Being greatly concerned about these things, I had several visions concerning them in my dreams. At one time I dreamed I was clothed in a soldier's uniform, having a sharp sword in my hand with which to smite my enemies. These also were fully equipped and came against me; however, when the combat commenced I was given a pair of wings, with which I flew above them, and beheaded one after another, and others I threw upon the ground, so that they at last fled in confusion. I then went and set the heads upon the dead and prayed with them, and soon they revived again and became my friends, aiding me in overcoming my enemies.

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\* By this and other paragraphs in this life sketch, it appears plainly that Miller was a preacher who exposed the sins of the impenitent and hypocrites, wielding the Sword of the Spirit in a way that his hearers were pricked to the heart. It was his endeavor to show to man his deeply fallen condition, to reprove his sinful life, and to lead the awakened to repentance and the penitent to Christ. His sermons were practical and Scriptural, clear, sharp and searching, yet also instructive and comforting, and the Word of God did not return void. Upon his knees, with his Bible instead of sketch books, he prepared his sermons; and if he found no opportunity to do this, then he often wept and prayed while seated upon his horse, going from one appointment to another, or dismounted and prayed in the woods for the salvation of souls.

This is doing the work of an Evangelical.

[R. Y.]

Soon after this J. N—— and I held a union meeting. I was to preach first, and the Lord was with me. D. G. exhorted in a fervent spirit. J. N. also spoke in his usual mild way, and closed the meeting. The latter I esteemed highly, regarding him as a good and experienced preacher. That night J. N. and I slept together, and I dreamed that I had been nominated as a candidate for the office of sheriff, and really had the majority of votes, with the authority of the Governor in my hand, and at the same time written orders to arrest the criminals and violators of the laws of the county; a house was also shown me, where such criminals were found, but when I got in I saw J. N. and other preachers, whom I knew, there, and hoped they would aid me in capturing the criminals, but just the reverse happened, for they all opposed my authority, and tried to make my certificate null and void. Yea, they even concealed those whom I was to capture. Grieved over their conduct, I referred to my authority, and threatened to take the criminals by force, but as soon as I undertook this, they all approached me with clubs and knives, but I called upon the Lord, and immediately I received wings, with which I ascended and flew back and forth over them in the house, until finally the noise of my wings frightened them, and they all retreated, and I could then capture the criminals. I ran after J. N., and said

to him he should not be so timid and run away, but should help me. I labored to secure a horse for him, so that he could ride with me, but he immediately sprang upon another horse, the saddle of which was old and had a poor girth, and in a full gallop he dashed into the dark thicket, while I called after him as loud as I could: "*For God's sake listen! Stop, you will fall, you will fall!*" But he rushed on, and as soon as he got to the bushes his saddle turned and he fell from his horse, but whether he was killed or only hurt I cannot tell, for I could see him no longer on account of the bushes. I awoke, and was astonished at this dream, I pondered whether it was not my duty to relate it to J. N. I commenced a conversation with him about the work of the Lord, but as he withdrew himself from me with a short reply, thereby showing his disinclination, I did not relate my dream to him, but when we parted I warned him mildly.

These things afforded me much joy in my heart, and gave me great confidence in God, without hypocrisy to preach the truth of the Gospel under all circumstances, persecutions and trials. But even all these things did not give me the positive assurance that God called me to the office of the ministry; for I did not wish to build upon visions and dreams, because these could be imagination without reality, for without a clear consciousness

of the assurance of the Holy Spirit, that God had called and anointed me to this service, I could not satisfy myself, notwithstanding while preaching I was conscious of great power, success, fearlessness and joy in the Lord; but I did not have the certain testimony that I was sent by God, which I noticed in Albright during his public ministrations, although privately he said nothing about it. This constrained me to appeal to God with more earnestness for this grace of assurance. I prayed much in secret, and often read my Bible, yea, for hours I lay prostrate before God, asking for the right understanding of his Word, and that he might qualify me to lead souls to him. With tears I acknowledged to God that I was not worthy to be an instrument in his hands, and if he regarded me as an inefficient laborer in his vineyard, he might cause his mercy to become great in others who would be better qualified for this office than I was, and that I was ready to cease preaching, or continue; but if he had called me thereto he should also give me the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and a divine assurance that I was called to this office. I also prayed to God from the depth of my heart for the conversion of sinners, that he might mercifully regard them and save them for his name's sake.

Through such persevering prayer the Lord revealed himself more and more to my soul, so that I realized greater light and better knowledge

of the Holy Scriptures, and several times while preaching I realized powerfully the influences of grace, the Word being accompanied with special anointing, so that involuntarily I frequently used the following words: "*The Lord hath anointed me, the Lord hath sent me.—I beseech you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.—I know you well; are you not this man? Are you not this woman?*" etc.

The results were, that the love and grace of God were poured upon me and the congregation in showers, according to His promise, so that I was constantly strengthened in faith. But finally it pleased God, while I was preaching from the words: "*I am the light of the world, he that followeth after me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life*" (John 8. 12) to give me according to his promise the certainty of my call to the ministry. In truth I can say that I was so positively assured that God called me to the ministry, as I was certain that God had forgiven my sins. Yes, if God had permitted it to have been written into my hands, I could not have received a greater assurance, yes, I knew it as certainly as I knew day from night!

But I was not only established in my call, I was also anointed thereunto by the Holy Ghost, so that my speech flowed like oil, and the glory of God shone around me. I stood like a wall against all the attacks of the devil, and I now knew of a truth



that I did not run of mine own accord, nor preach mine own words, but the word of the Lord, who had anointed and sent me to preach. I could now unhesitatingly and with joy appeal to God, as the prophets and apostles did: "*The Lord hath sent me to witness unto the sufferings and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the glory that should follow, and: We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.*" (Acts 4. 20.) And thus I could confidently testify to my brethren in Christ, that they would be saved, if they proved faithful and were obedient to the truth. Glory and praise be unto God and the Father of all our mercies, that he did not permit me and the souls entrusted to my care to walk in darkness, but in the light of God, so that we were assured that we should be saved if we continued in the grace of God to the end. If I could not have joyfully testified to this truth in preaching, and both by word and deed under all our trials corroborated this fact, I would not have been surprised to have seen those, who held to our doctrine, fall away, because they would not have had a sure foundation for the hope that was in them, and could not have joyfully witnessed for the truth. \*

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\*) Miller and the Evangelical fathers were none of those who beat the air, or ran on in uncertainty. They not only sought and taught the assurance of sonship in God's family, and their entire sanctification, but also most emphatically a clear evidence of the divine call to



From this time forth I noticed the opposition of wicked men but very little, determining to cling to Christ. Soon, however, my courage and faith in God was put to a severe test, coming very nearly costing my life.

I came to my father-in-law, where I met Bro. Albright, who immediately told me that the old man was very much displeased with me, as also with Bro. Walter, because the latter in his sermon accused him of hypocrisy, and added, that under such circumstances discretion would be very necessary, but requested, nevertheless, that I should preach. I told him that the man was very wicked, and I could not preach without reproofing sin. Still he insisted I must preach, but told me to be discreet. As the people had already gathered, I had no time left to meditate upon an appropriate text, but Albright and I immediately went into the room where the services were to be held. I

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the ministry. How much Miller longed for it, and what assurance he received, he declares himself in this volume. This principle was also introduced into the Discipline in the first question at the ordination of a deacon: "Have you the confidence that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon yourself the office of a preacher, thus to serve God to the honor of his name and to the upbuilding of his Church?" Without this evidence no one should venture to take upon himself this high office. Whom God wants for the office, him will he also call in a clear manner, so that he knows the Lord has "anointed and sent him."

Such only will God own, bless, and thereby build his Church. The *divine call* is and remains the authority for proclaiming the *divine message*. [R. Y.]

saw that the countenance of my father-in-law had assumed quite an unnatural expression, and that he had his sword-cane standing at his side. Albright, as well as the people, noticed these things, so that we sighed to God in prayer. During the opening prayer this text lodged in my mind: "I am the light of the world," and I concluded to preach from it. With a firm trust in God for his help, I announced the words, with the assurance that the Lord would make it manifest who were his servants. The gracious presence of God surrounded me, so that I could, without fear of man and with great liberty, show the difference between darkness and light, and the unreasonableness of such as lived in darkness and ignorance, and who were engaged in the works of darkness. And on the other hand I presented Christ in all his offices as the true light, and exhorted them to follow this true light by a true conversion and a holy life and self-denial, through reproach and persecution. I showed the great gain of such as follow the light; that "they shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." I also applied the words to myself, that I was Christ's follower and had the assurance that I was enlightened through the light of life, so that I did not walk in the darkness of uncertainty, but was reaching for the never-fading crown of life; upon which the praises of God flowed from my lips.

Through God's gracious power I could witness to the truth of this Gospel as never before.

My enemies were thoroughly defeated, and Bro. Albright and the other brethren looked upon me with approving smiles. Several of those present cried to the Lord for pardon, others were blessed and praised God, but the majority were amazed. An aged penitent sinner raised his head and said: "It does no one any good who wants to hinder you in preaching!" Whereupon my father-in-law left us and went into another room with his sword.

As Albright and I stepped to one side, he said to me: "*And now I am positively convinced that God has called you to preach.*" But, moved by a most cordial love, with tears in his eyes he said to me: "Brother, you are in great danger." I asked why? "Did you not notice," said he, "what your relatives intend to do?" I told him that I surmised it, yet I did not believe that they could harm me. He said he believed so too, but I might ere long be put to a severe test, and he advised me not to preach here again, for it might easily happen that my father-in-law would become angry and seek to wreak his malice upon me, and cause much trouble. He presented to me the example of Cain and Abel; and what counsel Christ at times gave his disciples to avoid malicious persons, but told me also I should under no circumstances become daunted, for the devil would do everything

that lay in his power to obstruct the work of the Lord, and that I should cling firmly to God's grace by fasting, watchfulness and prayer. I promised to accept his advice and to obey God, but did not think that such danger as he predicted was so close at hand, as I experienced to my sorrow a few weeks later.

After this I left to fill my appointments, but Satan also followed, and, by his subtlety and deceitfulness, almost overwhelmed me. During my travels I was led to think of the weary life I was compelled to lead as an itinerant minister; the future presented a very dark picture; I wondered what all might happen, and began to doubt whether I would be able to hold out, etc., until my office became almost an unbearable burden. God permitted Satan, I presume for wise purposes, to tempt me in a fearful manner, and, neglecting to lay my burdens upon him, and crying unto him for strength, they became too great for me, so that I began to fail under their weight. The devil no longer questioned my call to the ministry, nor my ability to do some good, but that I lacked the qualifications to give meat in due season to each, and that therefore I was spending my time and strength for nought. In this way Satan tried to make me unwilling to travel and preach, so that preaching became laborious, and finally a great burden. At times my mental conflicts became so

severe that great drops of perspiration covered my body.

At another time, while traveling, I was overtaken with such great weakness, that I was compelled to dismount from my horse and, as it were, sank fainting to the ground, and desired to die. I was now also entirely undetermined what I should do, whether to continue to preach or return home and preach as much as my business would allow. I determined to give my brother Solomon my horse, bridle and saddle, besides sixteen dollars annually for support, if he would serve in my place as an itinerant preacher. Many times I feared and trembled and thought my life seemed to be safe nowhere. I had many sleepless nights and great disquietude and solicitude in my heart. Once as I was sitting near the fire, I thought I saw hell open. I also had a terrible vision in a dream of the miserable condition of the damned in hell, and I thought I still heard their cries of lamentation ringing in my ears when I awoke. All struggles, trials and persecutions, which I had previously endured, were insignificant in comparison with these conflicts. The hundredth part of what I suffered in these days cannot be told. Albright, no doubt directed by God, traveled across my circuit, and paid me a visit. My condition was not unknown to him, for it seemed to me as if his pleasant gaze entered my inmost soul, so that



I could not refrain from tears. "You intend," he said, "to quit preaching." My answer was: "Yes, I am nearly persuaded to do so," and told him further that preaching had become such a heavy burden, that I could bear it no longer. He smiled, and replied: "Come, let us go aside and let us pray together." We went to a woods, and on our way thither he asked me whether I had done wrong in anything? I replied: "I know of nothing I have done that is not right, except that I am unwilling to preach any longer," and told him my severe trials as well as I could. He spoke a few words, and then added: "*You must not give the Bible over into Satan's hands, but hold it fast and oppose him with it.*" We then knelt down, and he prayed very earnestly, and soon the devil was compelled to flee from me, and allow me to use the Word of God. I now again realized that God's Word was truly on my side, and that it was none of the devil's business. My joy was so great that I praised God aloud, not being able to restrain myself, because through one prayer of faith the devil was put to flight. Albright then encouraged me by quoting from God's Word, namely, that the promise was: "*Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under foot.*"—(Psa. 9. 13; Mark 16. 18); and that if I lacked wisdom I could receive it from God through faith and earnest prayer, not



only to bring sinners to repentance and conversion, but also to instruct and build up God's people in true religion; for all sufficiency came from God, and whosoever would seek would also obtain it from God. He also asked me whether I had obtained the grace of entire sanctification. I answered that I could not say that I had. "Then you cannot preach sanctification with power," he replied, and exhorted me to seek this grace without delay, else I could not stand in great trials; for the devil would not cease his attacks, and therefore I should seek this grace in order to overcome, and willingly and with thankfulness accept all hardships and crosses as coming from the hand of the Lord. This sank deeply into my poor heart, and with tears I besought the Lord for the sanctification of my soul, and several times God's grace and power were poured upon me in such a manner that I could thank God for all sufferings. Yet the promotion of this work was for a time interrupted, because I did not thoroughly understand the deep depravity of the human soul. I longed to be wholly delivered from all evil desires and affections, and on this account I once spent nearly a whole day in agonizing prayer, and thus the Lord brought me nearer to perfect holiness, so that I could confidently trust in God, that he would yet bless and anoint me in such a measure with his Holy Spirit, that through him I could overcome the devil,

world and sin. Through this grace I learned to know that all adversities, and the plots of my enemies must work for my good and the establishment in the truth of godliness.

On May 25th, 1806, I received orders from Bro. Albright to travel to Buffalo, Penn's Valley and Morrison's Cove, to serve the circuit just formed by J. Walter and others. To undertake this alone was very hard for me, yet I resolved to be obedient and to venture, relying upon God's help. Albright advised me to keep a diary, in which to record all occurrences, labors, feelings, temptations, persecutions, etc., in order to remind myself of them in times of severe trials, for at such times, aside from the Holy Scriptures, my own recorded experience would be the best help, through which I could know whether I was still in the right path, and more especially since I had to travel alone.

On the 26th, about midnight, I arrived at home to bid adieu to my family, and to start to the above mentioned circuit. The next morning I hesitated whether I should defer my going a day, or not, but at the same time I felt very restless, as though danger was threatening me. About noon, while I was conversing with my brother Solomon, my father-in-law came riding along, and being considerably excited, he said: "You idler, why do you not build S. L's. sawmill? I will bring you to your senses yet, you lazy fellow — I'll take every-

thing you have from you yet, and chase you to the d—l!" But as I gave him my reasons for my conduct, he urged his horse towards me to trample me under foot. I leaned against the side of the house and screamed, upon which he left and rode on, so that I only received a slight wound on my arm. My wife and children hastened to me and wept aloud—I also wept, but got ready to leave at once, bidding them farewell, and traveled yet twelve miles to B. B., and remained there all night. Here before morning my saddle was cut in three places through the entire seat.

On the 31st I arrived at a "big meeting" of the United Brethren, near Lancaster, but was not invited to speak, there being many preachers present. I was glad for an opportunity to become better acquainted with these people.

On June 2d I had my saddle repaired, and afterwards rode to Michael Becker's, in Dauphin County, where an appointment had been announced for me. But, on the way I had a severe struggle, for at the harnessmaker's I felt somewhat ashamed on account of my cut-up saddle, and the suggestion came to me, "Here you can see that you are no servant of God, and that he does not want you for a preacher, for your persecutions are too outrageous," etc. I often dismounted from my horse and prayed in the woods, and also triumphed over the temptation, but through this I was prevented

from studying a text, and in addition I lost the road, and did not reach the place until after it was dark. I heard the people sing, and while I was getting off my horse, I said: "*Lord Jesus, what shall I preach?*" and suddenly these words rushed to my mind: "*The just shall live by faith.*" (Rom. 1. 17.)

I took these words for a text, and God worked with great power, the like of which I had never seen before. Several sinners fell upon their knees and cried for mercy. To a woman, whose heart was melted, I said, "You must pray for mercy." She fell upon her knees and called upon God, and in a short time received the pardon of her sins. God's blessing and grace were poured out upon his people, so that they seemed to be of one heart and of one mind, and shouted for great joy, sang, leaped and praised God. Thanks be unto God! I know of a certainty that the *just shall live by faith*. I now bade farewell to the friends, and in two days reached my circuit in Buffalo Valley, with great grace and much comfort in my heart. I had been on the circuit before, and hence was well acquainted with its spiritual condition. I resolved, therefore, to begin the work with fasting and prayer, and by the assistance of God, and without hypocrisy to teach the truth of the Gospel, even though I should not gain the favor of any person, only so that God would be satisfied with me. Con-

sequently I prayed often on my travels from one appointment to another, that I might please God and be useful to my fellow men. And to the praise of his name I dare say that I have not labored in vain, for I often preached with much grace and divine power.

My circuit was so large, that I could travel over it but once in four weeks, and hence many good impressions died away, so that, in a measure, I was compelled always to begin anew. I also perceived that it was much better to drop a part of my circuit, and limit it to two weeks—hence only to travel Buffalo, Penn's and Middle Creek Valleys. Though I did this very reluctantly, yet I saw no other way, if my labor should not be lost. And thus I gave a part of the work over to Providence, and traveled the other part with renewed earnestness, and the Lord blessed his Word, so that soon many souls were converted to God.

At Michael Maize's I had a preaching place, and we soon had regular services in the class, also much comfort and joy in the Lord, yet under severe persecution. In Eyer's neighborhood the Lord wrought repentance, but at times I almost despaired for the family, it seemed as though they wanted to perish in their own righteousness. But God so led me, that I again received new courage to preach the Word to them. I often preached with energy against the love of the world and self-



righteousness, so that they might realize their sinfulness as worthy of punishment. At first they were offended, but, through the grace of God, most of them became true Christians, and other persons in the neighborhood were also saved.

At Martin Dreisbach's I preached with great earnestness against the love and honor of the world and the deceptions of sin, by which, in a short time, I drove away the whole mass of the self-deceived, and the family was all that was left for me to instruct, whom God ere long blessed with true repentance and faith. One of those deceived ones, however, I could not drive away through preaching. He tormented the family and me with such bewitching talk, that even the devil himself in person could not have accomplished more. On June 22d, as this wicked person strove again with might against me, and uttered blasphemy against God's work, I called upon the Lord for assistance, in order to confound this man's device, and as he was in great rage, the power of God came upon me, and I threatened him in the name of the Lord, whereupon he immediately yielded, became frightened and fled, so that for some time we had no opposition from him. At this the family were greatly astonished, and now commenced to seek God in secret. My soul realized the comfort and nearness of the Lord in a greater measure than ever before, so that in the



evening I could pray with the family with great liberty.

In White Deer I preached at H. S's. The people seemed to be blessed, but besides this there was little stir. I exhorted them to seek salvation with all earnestness in order to live blameless before God and man.

In Penn's Valley I preached at Riem's, near the town of Muehlheim, but as God wrought conversion, it displeased the aged gentleman, and he prohibited further preaching in his house. But a man by the name of Bachman received me, and I preached with great grace, so that many of the inhabitants of Muehlheim were affected, and several of them were converted to God, and I was able to organize a class there.

In Middle Creek Valley I preached at John Thomas'. Here I earnestly testified against all frivolity, at which my hearers were displeased, yet I continued until the Lord had subdued their hard hearts. During harvest, as their wantonness had reached the highest degree, I preached from the words: "*The Lord be with you.*" (Ruth 2. 4.) I laid the question before them for an answer, whether the Lord or the devil was with them and controlled them in the harvest field. Many of them realized their sins, and wept over them. When I saw that they had become a little more tender, I held a class-meeting with them, and tried

to show them that they must advance in the work which had been commenced, or they would be damned in the end. This produced repentance and prayer with some, and with others opposition and anger; however, I continued to pray for them, as I was greatly concerned about their salvation. In the beginning of October I preached here from the text: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Rom. 8. 14.) God so powerfully blessed the Word that nearly all present began to cry out for mercy, and so loud were their cries that finally I could not hear my own voice. It was remarkable that the majority of those people who were thus calling upon God upon their knees had never seen or heard any one pray in this manner. The Lord, who knows how to carry on his own work, be praised! This manifestation of God's gracious power greatly increased my faith. When I came on my next round some of them had already found God to be a reconciled Father. I organized a class, and the Lord added his blessing.

In Swinefordstown and Selin's Grove I preached on the streets, and in this way was received into some families, but met with but little success.

In Derrstown (now Lewisburg) I wanted to preach on the street, but Mr. Wolf and some others opened their houses. There was some stir, and there were also some conversions in the place.

In Youngmanstown I preached in a meeting-house, but with very little success.

On October 25th we appointed a "big meeting" at Martin Dreisbach's. I expected that the penitents and newly converted, about forty in number, whom I had organized into classes, would be present at this meeting. I prayed much that the Lord might send the Brethren Albright and Walter to this meeting, endowed with divine power, to edify these people. On the appointed day both the preachers and members were present, and also many seekers. My feelings cannot be described, for I was both sad and yet rejoiced. I experienced the truth of the promise: "*Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.*" I mourned with the penitents, and yet I rejoiced in view of the consolations of the grace of God. I was appointed to preach the first sermon. During preaching the power of God came upon the people, so that many fell upon their knees and cried out for mercy. Albright and Walter preached with great power and great plainness, so that finally the congregation was visited with a powerful outpouring of the Spirit of God, and sinners could be heard calling upon God in every room of the house. In all parts of the house there was also heard the voice of thanksgiving and praise, for there was great joy among the brethren.

On the 27th Albright, Walter and myself

renewed our covenant with God to carry on his work with still greater earnestness. Albright admonished and encouraged us to continue our work courageously and fearlessly, and lead as many sinners to Christ as possible. \*

Soon after this "big meeting" a general revival broke out on my circuit, and no opposition of man could hinder it, so that after two months there were already over eighty newly converted persons within my borders. The Lord had also given me some co-laborers, who exhorted very fervently and in the power of God, and many houses were opened for holding divine service. God had so blessed me with faith-power, that if I prayed with penitents they sank to the floor, and for hours lay in an apparently unconscious condition. Such things I had previously seen in the meetings of Methodists, and although I believed that these things were wrought by the power of God, still I had no similar experience of my own; however, one evening,

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\* How solemn and blessed were the gatherings of these servants of God! But how excellent also and how remarkable was their written contract to "prosecute the work of the Lord with still greater earnestness," although they had hitherto entirely consecrated themselves to it! What an example for Evangelical ministers at their assemblies!—If at quarterly meetings, camp-meetings and annual conferences ministers would likewise solemnly unite to prosecute God's work, who could calculate the blessed results that would spring from them. And should not the gatherings of ministers always tend to that? Should not business matters be side issues only?

while engaged in prayer, consecrating myself wholly to God, to be used by him in accordance with his will, I experienced this power in my own soul. I fell, as it were, into a sweet slumber, enjoying inexpressible happiness and a realizing sense of quietness and assurance, and being filled with the love of God. This extraordinary outpouring of divine grace was an effective means in the providence of God of increasing my confidence in God, and my willingness to obey him in all things.

In December I held several "big meetings" in Berks County, where we experienced the same manifestations of the power of God, so that I could preach the Word with great joy and liberty, although I was called upon to pass through much suffering. I was sick, my eyes were very weak, I sustained great losses on my horses, and had other temporal difficulties, on account of which I often was compelled to go to God in prayer, but always found great consolation. About this time I spent several days in Albright's company, and of course told him all about my troubles and trials. He replied: "Your sufferings are severe, but it is somewhat your own fault, that they seem so burdensome and you feel so depressed, as you are unwilling to bow submissively to God, and as long as you continue in this frame of mind, God will work no change in your condition. For if you



were entirely sanctified from all these weaknesses, and you would steadfastly continue therein, you would not only not complain about your sufferings, but you would be satisfied and contented with the dealings of God with you, and praise him even for all things." In this way he pressed the duty of yielding wholly to God, to be content with my lot, and earnestly to follow after holiness, in order to be able to endure temptation. This exhortation impressed me very deeply, so that on our journey to a meeting, a distance of thirty miles, I spent most of the time in weeping, and in the evening I wrestled about an hour in prayer, until I was finally overwhelmed with a mighty stream of love, that I could most devoutly love, praise and adore God for all trials and sufferings, yes, I could love my bitterest enemies and persecutors, and thank God that he chastised me in so many different ways, that I might not be damned with a wicked world. I positively knew that all things must work together for my good, and I now felt perfectly willing to kiss the rod, and to walk before God in childlike confidence. Praise, honor and glory be unto thee, my Father and my God! Oh, that I might eternally thank Him for it!

From this time on I could talk and preach more clearly upon the subject of sanctification, but did not have sufficient confidence in myself to make a public profession that I had experienced it, until



at several "big meetings" and at a conference, where God powerfully supported me with his assistance, the work was tested. \*

The work of the Lord increased continually upon my circuit. Through the grace of God nearly the entire family of Martin Dreisbach were converted, among whom was their son John, who, together with several others, was afterwards called into the ministry. Here I organized a class, and the Lord gave them great joy and comfort, in edifying one another.

In Millheim, in Penn's Valley, many were added to the Lord, so that the class increased very rapidly. Among them was Matthew Betz, whom the Lord also sent forth as a minister of the Gospel of God, and who was the means of bringing many to repentance. He continued his work upon the walls of Zion as a faithful soldier of Jesus Christ until the Lord called him to his reward and rest.

In Brush Valley God also gave the increase, so that sinners were saved, and a class could be organized.

In Middle Creek Valley I organized a class of more than thirty members, for the Lord sent sal-

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\* From this and other paragraphs it is very evident how earnestly the sainted Albright exhorted his ministers to follow after holiness, and how intensely G. Miller sought this grace, until the word of promise was fulfilled in him: "Seek, and ye shall find." Such *pressing* after holiness, and such an experience of it, is very necessary, as well as evangelically Scriptural. [R. Y.]

vation in a wonderful manner, to both parents and children. The parents came to the "big meeting" at Dreisbach's, and while they were engaged in prayer, the converting power of God came upon their children at home, so that they leaped for joy, sang and praised God. When the parents returned and saw the grace of God, great joy ensued, and they praised God with all their might, for the promise given to them and to their children had been fulfilled. In our meetings God's power was so strikingly manifested that no one was able to stand up for any length of time, but all became so affected that they sank to the floor. I had never seen it on this wise before. However, I soon began to notice that the devil, the adversary and enemy of all good, tried to injure the good work through his craftiness by the introduction of some things that were insincere and inconsistent. The members became so boisterous, even during the opening prayer, that the preacher could not be heard, and made use of many unbecoming expressions, so that neither they nor any one else received any benefit from the prayer offered by the minister. I tried to point out to them the inconsistency of this custom; that if they desired to be edified by the prayer of the minister, it must be heard, and that others who were present should also be edified; still, they paid no attention to my exhortation, and even on several occasions they became still louder,

so that not only the prayer, but also the sermon could not be heard. I was greatly grieved by their conduct, but said no more just then; however, I prayed much in secret for them, that the Lord might teach them through his Spirit, that they might be instructed and edified in true religion. At this time, when I prayed so much in secret for them, they held a prayer-meeting, where they exercised according to their custom, but suddenly they were overtaken with terror and fear, and in their fright they cried out in amazement: "O God, if only Brother Miller was here now, we would gladly be obedient in that which he would teach us!" When I came to them again, they related it to me, but I gave them only a short answer, and again I went and prayed in secret, and asked God to give me light, grace and insight to instruct them in the right way, then the following words rushed to my mind, which I also chose for my text, viz: "*Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.*" Heb. 12. 28. During the sermon they were very attentive, so that the Word and the Spirit made deep impressions. At the conclusion of the sermon the manifestation of the power of God became quite general, but instead of disorder and confusion, there was solemnity and power, followed by shouts and

praises unto God. I recognized in these things an answer to my prayers, and thanked God for his goodness. Henceforth this society was obedient, and several of them soon afterwards experienced the grace of entire sanctification, and hence were better qualified to overcome the attacks of the evil one. They now prospered temporally as well as spiritually. Oh, that they might never forget what the Lord has done for their souls, so that they may not fall away and again mind earthly things!

In the neighborhood of Beaver's Dam the Lord worked mightily, especially did he bless a sermon preached on the parable of the sower, so that much good was done.

At Maize's and Eyer's God also greatly blessed me in preaching, so that the number of believers multiplied continually. This was the home of Henry Niebel, who was afterwards called of God to the ministry, and who often comforted me. In Lewisburg also we had conversions, and I formed a small class there.

Upon the whole the Lord richly blessed my labors on this circuit, so that in the beginning of the year 1807, there were more than one hundred converted persons united in classes to serve God with earnestness, and save their souls. I now endeavored diligently to bring my brethren and sisters to the experience of deliverance from all

sin, so as to be able to reign and triumph over all evil, both inwardly and outwardly; especially all slandering and unchristian conduct towards each other, and that they should esteem, exhort and reprove one another in love, so that the God of peace would be with them. I also exhorted them to think of their teachers, to pray for them, and to support them with their temporal means, so that they might discharge their duties with joy and not with sorrow, for this would not be good for them. I heartily loved my brethren, but still more fervently did I love my God, who had not only chosen unworthy me to be his child, but also to be a co-laborer in his Church. And although I reckon myself as the least among his servants, yet my labor in the Lord was not in vain. But all the good that was accomplished, was done through His grace, for His strength is made perfect in weakness; therefore I must not boast of myself, but of the Lord, and I will gladly say: *Lord, I am thy unworthy servant*; for I have only done my duty, therefore I expect to be *saved alone through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ!*

The persecution upon my circuit was not specially great. It consisted mostly in slanderous talk, lies, calumnies and scoffing. But our regulations and union, as an Association to work out our soul's salvation, of course, was everywhere spoken against by nominal Christians, as well as by Deists

and Atheists. Even some fair-minded men had been prejudiced against us, and passed unjust judgment upon us. However, among the members of the Church there was unity both in word and action. Oh, that they might continue thus unto the end!





PART THIRD.

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*The First Annual Conference is held. — Albright is to compile a Discipline, which remains unfinished on account of his early death. — The joy of the wicked over his death. — Miller undertakes the compilation of the Discipline; his severe trials, sufferings, and his steadfast confidence in God. — Writes his Autobiography.*

IN January, 1807, I was appointed by Bro. Albright to Lancaster circuit, and Bro. Walter took my place. Though I left my circuit very reluctantly, duty demanded of me to obey those who were placed over me in office. But circumstances also required that I should not travel so long on one appointed field; for this reason I was sent back again after a few months, endowed with power from on high, and filled with the blessing of the Gospel.

In a certain locality, where the devil had destroyed nearly all good that had been done, I preached and presented to professors their dangerous condition, but pointed out also the good that was still among them, and in this way tried to encourage them to serve God more earnestly. Finding that they had confidence in me, I prepared myself through prayer to win them by God's grace,

and chose the words of the Lord for my text: "*How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!*" (Matt. 23. 37.) God blessed the Word, so that on the same evening six persons were reclaimed, and again served God with earnestness of soul. Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he here also persuaded the backsliders to return again.

I also preached in Manorland, Lancaster County, realizing the blessing of God, so that, notwithstanding the opposition of such as under the mask of unsectarianism, protested against rules and order, a strong society was organized. Here Bro. John Erb was induced, by the grace of God, to start out as an itinerant preacher, and also often strengthened my heart. May God reward him!

In Berks County, at Muehlbach (now Lebanon County), the Lord wrought mightily in the conversion of many during this year. Through God's grace we also held our first annual Conference here, and were greatly blessed during the proceedings.

Bro. Albright was elected Bishop of the Association, and the Conference voted that I should be ordained Elder. This gave me new cause to humble myself with all my heart before God, to beseech him for the anointing and the power of

the Holy Ghost, in order faithfully to discharge my important duties.

The Conference recognized the necessity of having a Church Discipline, and upon Bro. Albright's advice the Episcopal form of Church government was adopted, and we chose him to compile it, and have it published. But the Lord wanted to release him from his labors and toils, and through death took him into a better life, where he now rests from his toil, and enjoys the fruit of his labors.

The death of this pious man was felt by the entire Association, and many hearts most keenly realized his early departure, more especially the ministers. But our enemies greatly rejoiced that they were rid of the man who used such a keen edged sword, for they disliked him very much. They now indulged the hope that all would be at an end, and they would no longer be disturbed, so that they cried out loudly: "They are defeated now; Albright is dead, and they are at an end!" However, they greatly erred, for although Albright was dead, yet God, who was the Author of the good work, still lived, and owned the work as his, knowing how to carry it on and how to extend it. Praise be unto our mighty God, who does not despise the lowly and humble, but much rather chooses them as his possession!

Through the death of Albright the Discipline remained uncompiled, and by the advice of my

brethren I undertook this important work, but not without some annoyance, as the Conference had appointed Albright, and not me. And on the other hand I was not an expert at writing, and most of the ministers were inexperienced, with the exception of Bro. Walter, who also strongly urged me to have the Discipline ready for the press as soon as possible.

In December, 1808, when Bro. John Dreisbach and I traveled Buffalo Circuit, I commenced the compilation.

On Christmas evening Bro. Dreisbach preached at the house of a Methodist in Lost Creek Valley, who had invited us. After the sermon I exhorted under the influence of the grace of God. When the meeting was closed, I spoke with the family, and with tears they acknowledged their dangerous condition, that from a lack of watchfulness, and also because their preachers had left them—the neighborhood, which was principally German—they had lost the life which comes from God. I sympathized with them, exhorted them earnestly again to seek the Lord, and said that we hoped God would soon call some more German men to the ministry, so that they also could be visited and encouraged. Thereupon I went to bed contentedly, comforted of God, and, as far as I knew, was physically well, and had the following dream: I walked on a street, positively certain that it was the way to

heaven. I walked a long distance with good courage, until my way led through a vast thicket, through which I hurried the more that I might not be overtaken by night in this dense forest. Soon I arrived at a place where the bushes were covered with snow and ice, on both sides of the road, and the branches of the trees bent over the road on account of the weight upon them, so that with much effort I stepped over some, and others I shook off, and finally crept through under the rest on my hands and feet, until at last I was so exhausted, that I laid myself upon my knees and elbows, and rested and got breath again; but did not trust to lay my head down, on account of the extreme cold and fear of being overtaken by sleep. After much exertion I suddenly got through it, and it seemed to me as though some one had opened a door and let me out. I looked back, and was astonished when I saw the woods on both sides of the road, through which I had come, full of wild and savage beasts, who in their rage wanted to devour me. I thanked God, who had so graciously delivered me out of this danger, turned quickly and walked on where, after a short distance, I saw the city of God, the new Jerusalem lie before me. I leaped for joy, and courageously hurried on until I noticed a stream of water which was between me and the city. I was perplexed and concerned how to cross it; meanwhile an angel came towards me, seized



me and led me in a quick flight towards the city, and it seemed to me as though I had wings myself and was flying by the side of the angel. The city was white as snow and clear as transparent glass. We flew through a brightly illuminated door, and with many thousands of thousands of saints we soared up and down through heaven. But I knew no one of those who were basking in joy, on account of the great glory that surrounded them. My body and clothes were as white as snow, and as clear as crystal, and in my hands I had a transparent clock, upon whose dial plate there moved a bright stone, similar to gold, more wonderful than can be described. The angel showed me a great hall in the distance, by which, in looking at it, I was more quickened than by all the rest that I had seen here, and as I was longingly looking thither, my guide said: "*Behold, this is the place of your rest and joy.*" I requested him to bring me to this place of the glory of the Lord. "As soon as you will have perfectly obeyed the Holy Scriptures and the Discipline, which you will compile from the same," said he, "but now you must first go back to the earth and complete this important work." I gave him as an answer: If God would write upon my heart his Word and that which I was to compile out of it, I would be ready to go back again; but if not, then I would refuse to do it, for unless God would write it upon my heart



I could not complete it. Now the angel took the stone that was found in my clock, and with great power stamped it upon my breast, and I felt as though an arrow had pierced me through, and I had become mortally wounded. The vision of the city vanished, and I stood upon the earth by the side of a ladder, whose top reached into heaven. The angel said: "You must get on this ladder and step from one round to another, until you have arrived at the place of your rest." Although I felt very sick on account of the pain in my breast, nevertheless, I hastened and got on the ladder, and with great effort reached the top of it, where, to my joy, I could again see the place of my rest. Here I had to press through a very narrow door, and, having entered it, I arrived at the desired place, and sank into a sweet slumber. No doubt I should have continued longer in this slumber, if I had not been awakened by a severe pain.

When I awoke, I felt sick and a pain in my breast. In the morning I related my dream to Bro. Dreisbach, and that I expected to get very sick, perhaps also die soon, for my body seemed to be touched by the hand of the Lord.

From this time on not a day passed that I did not feel affected in my mind on account of my bodily weakness, and believed that my end was near. \*

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\* The proverb, "dreams are foam," is not always correct.—Joseph

This day I preached from Luke 18. 14: "*This one went down to his house justified rather than the other.*" The Lord wrought wonderfully among the people. Glory be to his name! In the evening I preached from 1 John 3. 8: "*For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*" We enjoyed great blessings. This night I became very sick. Several days afterwards I came to Dauphin County, to Bro. John Walter, who had here appointed a watch-night meeting. I was so weak in my head that I could not endure any noise, and for this reason I remained alone in a room for some time, until I got a little stronger, then I preached with

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in the Old, and Joseph in the New Testament, had dreams which were divine revelations. "And your old men shall dream dreams," is a promise of the new Covenant. It is peculiar that the dreams that are true, in many instances are incomprehensible to the dreamer, and that they require an interpretation. Sometimes their early fulfillment makes them plain. Thus it was with our Bro. Miller. His wonderful dream he did not understand himself, for he believed it was an indication that he would die ere long, and yet he lived about eight years longer. No doubt the history of Miller is the explanation of his dreams. After he had worked his way through many and great difficulties upon a road which led to heaven, and was near the New Jerusalem, he looked back, and then first saw very clearly, how many dangers he had escaped, and thanked God who had so graciously rescued him, which was a correct representation of his course of life hitherto. Like all true Christians, Miller also cherished the wish to enter into his rest, which also manifested itself in his dream.

After a glimpse of it was granted him, it was said that he must return to the earth until he had compiled and obeyed the Discipline. That he would have to pass through many difficulties and sufferings during the remainder of his life, was indicated to him by the ladder,

great liberty from the words, Rom. 5. 5: "*But hope maketh not ashamed, for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.*" We were greatly blessed at this meeting, and praised God for his grace.

After a few weeks I arrived at my home under great bodily weakness. Although it appeared at first as though I would be prevented from compiling the Discipline through my indisposition, yet Divine Providence so overruled, that it only pro-

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which he had to ascend with great effort, until he was permitted to go to his place of rest, which was also clearly fulfilled through his sickness and other sufferings from this time on. But the most important point after all is, that through the smiting of the angel in his dream, his health was so impaired, that henceforward he was indisposed, and therefore before long compelled to abandon his circuit.

These circumstances resulted in the compilation of the Discipline, and besides it he also issued a short report of the life and labors of the sainted Albright, also his own autobiography, and a book entitled "Practical Christianity," which would have hardly occurred, if he could have continued his itinerant labors.

Divine Providence had led Albright into the Methodist Church, where he became acquainted with their excellent regulations and Discipline, instead of going to the "Independent people," who rejected all Discipline; and now the itinerant labors of Miller were checked, so that he could compile the Discipline, which Albright had already recommended and the Conference ordered. We might almost say he was, like Paul, kept quiet, in order to write the Epistles for the Churches.

The Church regulations and Discipline of the Evangelical Association are manifestly gifts of Divine grace and Providence. Only through proper regard and true administration of her good Discipline can this Association fulfill her calling and retain God's favor. Woe unto her if she lightly regards and neglects this Scriptural arrangement

[R. Y.]

ceeded the faster, and was more correctly done; for, in my weakness, I went to work and compiled Articles of Faith and Discipline, partly out of the Word of God, and partly according to the Episcopal form of Church government. I presented this document to the annual Conference for approval, and it was accepted and referred to me for publication.

On account of a lack of support this work seemed to be connected with many difficulties, yet the matter soon took an entirely different course, quite unexpected by any, for when these Articles of Faith appeared in print, they pleased the Association so well that the expenditures could easily be met. The results of these regulations in the Church were that all received new courage, steadfastly to retain their union with God and with one another, and a number were persuaded to unite with us, in order to work out their salvation according to these rules. Thanks be unto God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who permitted me, as an unworthy instrument, also to do something in my bodily weakness to the honor of his name!

The internal and external temptations which Satan thrust upon me during this work, and how I overcame them in prayer through God's help, cannot be described. Many times I was engaged until midnight in wrestling prayer. Often I lay

with bowed knees upon my bed before God, and, weary from much mental effort, the repose of my body was disturbed. It often seemed to me as though it was impossible that this work could be completed, yet the Lord permitted it to succeed, and prolonged my life, so that I could also obey its admonitions. I was also very anxious to obey that which I had compiled for the instruction and benefit of others.

But God did not want to leave me untried, for at an annual Conference I gave my testimony of entire sanctification, which I believed I had experienced, and also to our Church Discipline, which I asserted I obeyed, to the great comfort and edification of my own soul and those of my brethren. I thank God from the depths of my soul that by so doing the assurance of perfect love became more assuring than ever before.

At this Conference I noticed that some of the traveling ministers were more engaged in secular business than was necessary for them, especially in trading horses; and some of them desired better support, and others brought charges against their colleagues, that they neglected their appointments and neglected their duties, and some of them even wanted to choose their circuits and colleagues, etc. I strongly contended against these evils, proving them to be injurious, and made several propositions how to remedy these difficulties, but the majority



were wedded to their own opinions, while only a few stood by me. Some were of the opinion that because I had not constantly traveled I should have but little to say about these things. However, I realized the grace of God to such a degree, that I took no offence, and agreed to submit the questions at issue to the oldest itinerant preacher, having confidence that the Lord would overrule all things to the furtherance of his cause and the prosperity of the Conference. One of the oldest itinerants then gave his opinion, but he met with strong opposition, which he could not so easily bear, but which caused him severe trials. I next informed the Conference that I was not at all hurt that my proposition was not adopted, but that I would accept the matter as coming from the hand of God, like all other trials, and that, although they all seemed to be very much discouraged, I was not, that I believed the members of the Conference to be honest in their convictions, but they did not have sufficient grace to bear with one another and submit themselves to one another, and that they must change in this respect, or they would inculcate this same spirit of disobedience among the societies to their own hurt, and exhorted them all to seek entire sanctification, in order to carry on the work of God in love and unity. This exhortation seemed to have its desired effect, and the differences were amicably adjusted.



After the Conference, the ministers still being all present, I preached from the words: "*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.*" Phil. 2. 5. The Lord blessed the Word to many hearts, so that a spirit of unity and love seemed to pervade all the brethren. Several days later I preached at a "big meeting," on James 1. 12-15: "*Blessed is the man that endureth temptation,*" etc. Nearly all the preachers were present here also, and many of the tempted ones overcame their temptations and praised God for his grace. One of them, who was as near to me as my right hand, became convinced through this sermon that he did not enjoy complete victory over a certain temptation, and now overcame it through the grace of God, both in word and deed. May God bless him for his obedience and keep him faithful unto the end!

From this time on I realized the grace of entire sanctification in such a measure, and in such quickening power, that I was compelled to confess this grace publicly while preaching, or do violence to my convictions; for the doctrine of holiness flowed from my lips involuntarily, so that I bore a certain and clear testimony before God and the Church, and could say: "*Not I, but the grace of God in me.*" The Lord seemed especially to bless the preaching of this doctrine, which gave me great joy. Some of the brethren became so fully assured

of its truth that they seemed to have outstripped me when we met in conference session the following year. Blessed be the name of a gracious and merciful God, who has blessed this doctrine of holiness to the edification of many souls. \*

This induced me to draw up business rules for the Conference, which were also adopted, and we could now do our business in accordance with these rules, so that the majority of votes decided all questions, and hence evils could be suppressed and good purposes promoted, without hurting each other's feelings, or offending the weaker brethren. Our Conferences hereafter became seasons of great grace, in which all were edified and encouraged. The Lord be praised who thus ordered it.

Being urged to write a book on a "Practical Christianity," I consented to do so, and compiled the work in accordance with my convictions of truth, drawn from the Scriptures and my own experience, for the instruction of my brethren, the

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\* Father Wonder, of Carey, Ohio, stated to the compiler that Miller often preached on sanctification, very decidedly and with great power. He insisted upon it that Christians must be filled with such a divine fullness that they could at once resist all temptations. His texts upon this subject were mostly the following: "Be ye holy, for I am holy." "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth." "I sanctify myself for them, so that they might also be sanctified in the truth." "Be ye perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," etc. Father H. Niebel says, he had never heard the like, and never heard any one preach on sanctification as Miller preached it.

furtherance of the knowledge of God among men, and to show how each one in his sphere should serve and honor God. May God grant his blessing to the unpretending volume to the edification of many. I wrote the book A. D. 1811, but it was not published until A. D. 1814. At the same time I published the biography of the sainted Jacob Albright.

In the meanwhile I preached as often as my bodily weakness would permit. I had still to endure persecutions, on the one hand from wicked men, who opposed me with threats, slander and scoffing, while on the other hand, those who flattered themselves to be Christians, but were only nominal professors, slandered me on account of my zeal for the Lord. Even among the M—— such persons were to be found, who stood in opposition to the truth. But thanks be unto God, who gave me the victory over my enemies, that I could pray for them and admonish them when opportunity presented itself. Some of them did reform, others fell under the same judgment which they had falsely passed upon me. Even my father-in-law, who through his cunning craftiness had misled and entrapped most of his children to sin again, was compelled to observe the difference, discontinue his accusations against me, and leave me in peace, even giving me aid in temporal things.

Some might be anxious to know how I succeeded

in temporal concerns during these eight years. I had traveled about five years, and the rest of the time I was very feeble in health, and when I commenced my itinerancy my temporal matters were in an unsettled condition, as I previously stated. However, things shaped themselves in a peculiar manner, beyond the highest expectations of myself or my friends. All my debts had been paid, and I retained an unencumbered homestead, which I afterwards sold for two thousand and six hundred dollars, and my family was well provided during all this time. Some might be led to think that preaching must be quite a profitable calling, if debts can be paid and property retained. But I did not receive above two hundred dollars for the entire time of eight years, and my traveling expenses more than covered that amount. I had inherited very little, except that my father-in-law, in A. D. 1811, gave me, upon the urgent solicitation of his wife, a bond amounting to \$186.75, because I was apparently prospering, even in worldly matters, much more than the other members of the family, although they were doing all in their power to become rich,—the Lord giveth to whom he will.

In the beginning I rented my farm, but only became deeper involved by it. My wife at first thought we might serve God and mammon at the same time, however soon became willing to give

up the world. I then sold a hundred acres of my land and paid my debts. We resolved to be contented with little, and through diligence and economy to get through the world honestly. God's blessing rested upon all we had, for although I now owned but a small tract of land, and that was sometimes sowed late, yet we had no lack of bread, nor any other good thing, so that we were frequently surprised about it. Moreover, the peace of God abode with us, so that love and unity reigned and controlled our hearts. After I was compelled to locate on account of bodily infirmities, I settled up my temporal affairs, for I expected soon to die, as I felt very weak, frequently sinking to the floor, and often hardly able to arise from my knees after prayer.

Our family peace, however, became somewhat disturbed in the following manner: In reproving sin, I usually spoke in a decided and positive manner, and by the grace of God had succeeded to suppress all idle and vain talk and backbiting on my circuit, and now occasionally some sanctimonious persons would call at our house and tell my wife what this or that nominal Christian or backsliding M—— had said of me and of our Church. In her simplicity, and without evil intention, she would relate these things to me again in the presence of others, and thus furnish material for slander. I saw at once that Satan was trying to



gain some advantage over us, and hence exhorted my wife and others to avoid such slanderers, and if they did not want to do that, they should no more burden my heart with these things. I felt it my duty also to preach against this evil, and chose the words of James for my text: "*If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.*" James 1. 26. Through God's grace, I set forth the sin of slander so clearly, that it was impossible for them to do otherwise than wilfully to oppose or to reform. I am convinced that our class has suffered much from slandering: and ministers should be careful that they do not neglect their duty, but earnestly reprove this evil. I am fully persuaded that if the sin of evil-speaking is allowed to continue, whatever its nature may be, especially against those in authority, father or mother, or against any other person, and the flame of this consuming fire is not quenched, it will cause grief and sorrow, and confusion in the Church. One of the reasons why so few married men consecrate themselves to the ministry, is because they allow themselves to be controlled by their wives, yea, frequently more than by an annual conference. The Lord pardon their lack of firmness, and bring many more married men into his vineyard. Should among so many hundreds not one be found whom the Lord has called



and qualified for the work of the ministry? I can hardly believe it. Witty skeptics may think what they will, I prefer to believe what I have myself experienced.

If a minister is not obedient to his call, the work of God will stagnate in his soul. He certainly cannot teach the doctrine of holiness clearly nor effectually, nor can he properly discriminate if he hears it taught by others, and besides that he cannot guide erring ones properly. Should he attempt to do so without possessing the grace of God, he will only cause the injury to be greater, instead of doing any good. Of this I am fully convinced, my ministry having given me opportunity to see these things, having heard a minister preach on sanctification erroneously, and not in accordance with the Word nor my experience.

The grace of sanctification is the complete victory in us through Christ, that we can momentarily resist and overcome all temptations and allurements to sin, so that evil or sin can neither inwardly nor outwardly reign over us. But the sanctified person dare not think for a moment that he is not exposed to the danger of being tempted and allured into sin; he has much rather reason to be watchful and prayerful, and to work out his salvation with fear and trembling; but he can also be assured that the grace of God, through Christ, is stronger than the devil, the world and the flesh.

Whosoever does not receive this grace in vain, but perseveres in it with watchfulness and prayer unto the end of his life, will be preserved from all sin, and kept unto eternal life.\*

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\* This definition of "perfect holiness," as the Evangelical fathers were accustomed to call it, as "the complete victory in us through Christ, that we can momentarily resist and overcome all temptations and allurements to sin, so that evil or sin can neither inwardly nor outwardly reign over a wholly sanctified person," etc., was very current in the early days of the Evangelical Association, and is also mentioned in the Discipline in the Article on Christian Perfection, which says that in the state of Sanctification and Christian Perfection "all self-will and selfishness is perfectly subdued, and such a Christian resists and overcomes any temptation the moment it presents itself." And also in the third question to candidates for the ministry: "Is the love of God shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Spirit in such a measure that you have complete victory over every sin, inwardly and outwardly? If not, do you earnestly desire it, do you seek it with all your heart?" Again in the fifth section of "the rules and directions for preachers," in the first direction: "He should be in such a state of grace, that no sin whatever has dominion over him, neither inwardly nor outwardly; and should this not be the case with him, that he strive without delay to become a partaker of perfect love, otherwise he cannot abide as a true Christian, much less as a teacher." This "complete victory" was regarded as synonymous with the following paragraph of the Article on Christian Perfection: "We are unanimous that we may be redeemed from sin long before we die, that is, from all evil affections and desires," for when we "ward off and overcome any temptation when it presents itself," and hence "momentarily resist and overcome," without the divine rest and peace in the soul being disturbed, then there is no sin present to correspond with the temptation.

And further also as synonymous with: "To love God with all the heart, with all the soul, with all the mind and with all the might"—which was also denominated according to John's teaching by the expression "perfect love," as above mentioned. To the fathers the expressions, "complete victory," "perfect love," and "entire sanctification," were synonymous. Neither did they in the least suppose that the expression, "complete victory," as applied to the entirely sanctified, presupposed that a regener-

Yes, Lord, thy grace is our life; that we can lead a holy life is through thy grace; that we have peace in our families and classes is through thy grace; that we have peace with the Church of God, yea, as far as in us lieth, with all men, is through thy grace. Oh, that each one might receive and retain the grace of God! Thanks be given to the God of love that he has helped me through all my difficulties, and who has not suffered me to be entirely fruitless among my brethren. Thanks be unto God for this grace!

With this grace I resolved not to be a respecter of persons, not to regard the rich higher than the poor; and not to show more leniency to my rela-

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ate person does yet commit sin, and hence is an actual sinner, as little as "perfect love" presupposed that he who does not possess it was entirely cold, or had no love at all; or "perfect holiness," that a person who is not entirely sanctified is totally without holiness. They taught that the regenerated had victory over sin, so that he lives without committing actual sin; notwithstanding evil inclinations and desires still adhere to him, and a complete victory by the entirely sanctified, so that he momentarily refuses and overcomes the temptation. Bishop Seybert once in a sermon upon this subject very excellently defined the position of the fathers, in that he asserted that complete victory or entire sanctification was known by this: that when the Christian was tempted to previous cherished *sins*, everything that was in him would rise up against it, yea, that he now hates these things the most—instead of entering into a long-continued struggle with inward inclinations toward them as formerly—in such a one the *heart root* of sin was eradicated.

And herein also must the practical sense of this *divinely instructed* man be recognized. Not fine-spun theories, which could be stretched and bent at pleasure, but truthful, practical explanations and definitions, which touched the point in its depths, were taught by them.

[R. Y.]

tives than to strangers. This resolution the Lord blessed, so that it did not remain fruitless with my loved ones; and this also furnished much with which to describe on a better basis true and practical Christianity.

Because I supposed, as I have already mentioned, that I would not live long, so I arranged my temporal matters, that after my decease my family might be provided for, assigning my property to my wife, and prayed the Lord that he might assist and help her to overcome.

But, in the year 1812, my circumstances changed very much, and that so rapidly and easily that I could hardly realize it. Since I had gained somewhat in strength and health, my wife advised me to sell my farm and to buy another. I felt disinclined to do so, yet since an opportunity presented itself, I sold it.

A short time afterwards I visited Union County, and without any trouble purchased another tract of land in Buffalo (now Union) Township, and we moved thither on the 1st of May, 1812.

My temporal gain by this exchange was considerable. I believed that I had doubled my estate in value. What we possessed in a limited quantity in the former place, we had here in abundance. If I had only been wise enough in the beginning, and would have rented my land to an experienced farmer, we should have escaped many inconveni-

ences, but we had forgotten that I lacked the knowledge of farming, and even though I would have had it, my bodily weakness and official labors would not have permitted me to engage in such a business. Hence, through losses we must become wise; for now I needed agricultural implements, as also laborers, and so I had ere long made myself, as also my wife and children, servants of my domestics, and I soon learned that in this way we all were foolish slaves. We placed a great obstacle in our way to attend religious services, for we hardly found time to attend a "big meeting," though before this we could hold such meetings ourselves. And in addition to this, when the year closed, we were no better off in our temporal matters than when we began. And why, then, so much useless trouble, if we can get along just as well with less? Neither was I as useful to my brethren as I might have been, and this may have been one cause why I was visited with severe sickness. At any rate, I thank God for it, for thereby I was rescued from the danger threatening me, so that in the Spring, at a "big meeting," I could preach with grace and freedom from the words, "*Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*" Matt. 6. 24.

Before I took sick I had already determined to change my business; but my loved ones and others advised me not to—every beginning was difficult, and we must patiently wait, that our trouble



would yet be richly rewarded, but we were disappointed, for instead of reaping joy we experienced much sorrow. I became greatly concerned about these things. I heard others preach with great spiritual power, but I felt myself weak, and had not the success while preaching as formerly, and one year after another followed without any material change.

Labor is necessary, for man is commanded to work, and in the sweat of his brow to eat his bread, and an indolent man can be no Christian. "If any would not work," says Paul, "neither should he eat," for God has commanded us to labor; but let no one be deceived, the working out of our soul's salvation is paramount to everything else. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," and all the rest, if you do your duty, "shall be added unto you." "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And, having food and raiment, let us be therewith content."

In the Spring of the year 1815 I was again taken very sick, so that I was unable to attend to my business. Brother Michael Deibler then relieved us of a part of our burden by farming some of my land. I then spent most of the time in reading and prayer, waiting for my departure. But when I looked at the great danger in which I would leave my family, while being connected



with so much business, a heavy burden rested upon my heart. I therefore frequently talked with them about these things, for their salvation lay near my heart.

Connected with my bodily weakness I had many internal and external sufferings, and on this account I sought counsel of my brethren during these heavy trials, and requested them to remember me in their prayers, notwithstanding I was perfectly convinced that God, who had helped me hitherto and given me the victory, also would not forsake me in the future. He permitted me daily to feel His love and enjoy His grace, so that I could love my adversaries, pray for them, and live among them, comforted and joyful in trials and afflictions. I could also praise God for all adversities. But still I was not ashamed to ask my brethren and sisters to pray for me, because I knew from experience how unable man is of himself to stand in threatening dangers, and how powerful, faithful and earnest prayer can strengthen the weak. I appealed earnestly to God in secret, that I might learn to know his will perfectly, so that my will might be entirely submissive to the divine will, that if my Lord for wise purposes would chasten me like a Job, that he would care for me in temporal as well as in spiritual matters as a gracious and loving Father, and not permit me to perish.

The chastisements of the Lord are manifold, and, to us, often incomprehensible, for his ways are not our ways, and his thoughts are not our thoughts; and we should give ourselves no trouble as to the manner which God chooses to correct his children,—for what God doeth, is well done,—nor dare we compel others to conform their lives to our own, although we may have fully surrendered our wills to God, and act in conformity with his will; for God himself forces no one into his service, but allows each to act freely, as he has appointed a day when he will reward every one according to his works. However, acting in the relation of parents, or as persons having authority from God, we may chastise those under our care according to their transgressions, but we have no right to rule over their consciences.

As I had given myself so entirely to the Lord as a holy and acceptable sacrifice, it was fulfilled in me what Paul says: “*God worketh in me both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*” Thanks be unto the Lord that, through adversities and chastisements, and the co-operation of his grace and love, he moved my heart and made me more willing than ever before to tear myself loose from all the transitory things of this world, as well as from its snares and fetters, and consecrate myself and all my time more fully to my calling and office for the salvation of men. This being my firm

determination, my prayer was: "Have I found grace before thee, O Lord! permit me to be well pleasing in thy sight, whether my days on earth are many or few, for thou, my God, hast given me a will to live entirely for thee, and not to the world; oh, give me also the ability to do according to thy pleasure. If it even should please thee to withdraw from us temporal blessings, and to prove our faithfulness with severe chastisements, nevertheless let it please thee to save our souls and preserve thou us from the cares of life, as far as thou, O Father, seest that it is necessary and wholesome for us." \*

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\* What a diligent and earnest man of prayer the sainted Miller was, becomes very clear when the expressions that refer to it are grouped together. Soon after his conversion he says: "My brother Solomon and I united in prayer to God for his help." Soon after "he besought the Lord for steadfastness" under persecutions. As class leader he continued "to petition God in public and secret for his grace" for efficiency for this office. When he started out to preach the Gospel, he "wept and prayed much in the woods and elsewhere in secret, that sinners might be converted to God." Concerned lest he might injure one soul through his preaching, he says: "On that account I prayed much, yea, often with weeping, that God might preserve me from injuring anyone through my preaching." To receive the positive assurance of his call to the ministry: "I supplicated and prayed much in secret, often wet my Bible with tears. Yea, for hours I lay before God with weeping for the correct knowledge of his Word, etc." When Albright exhorted him to seek sanctification, it sank very deep into his heart, "and with tears I prayed to God for the sanctification of my soul"—"on this account I once spent nearly a whole day in wrestling prayer." Again, he wept and prayed almost constantly during a journey of forty miles, "and in the evening I wrestled about an hour in prayer." During a severe trial he often "dismounted from his horse and prayed in the thicket, and

On the first day of July, 1815, I resolved, if it should please God to prolong my life, to arrange what I had recorded at different times about my experiences, occurrences and difficulties properly into an autobiography. I withdrew from worldly business as far as I believed it was in accordance with God's will and ordered the necessary things which I required to make a short journey, so that,

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triumphed over the temptation." After this he says, "I often prayed from one appointment to another, that I might become pleasing to God, and useful to my fellow men." At a place where it looked sad, spiritually, he said: "But I prayed for them, for their salvation lay near my heart." Relative to a protracted meeting, he prayed "much in secret unto the Lord." For a class into which the enemy tried to enter, "he prayed much in secret that the Lord, by his Spirit, might instruct them." At another place "he prepared himself in prayer to win them through God's grace." While he was compiling the Discipline he spent "many times in wrestling prayer until midnight." On account of his temporal circumstances, "he longed after God in earnest secret prayer, that he might learn to know God's will perfectly." And above he concludes this subject with a fervent prayer. Such earnest persevering and faithful men of prayer were also Miller's co-laborers: for hours, days, yea, through whole nights they called upon God for his Spirit and blessing to be poured upon themselves and all the people.

With these Evangelical preachers the question was, What above everything else is necessary for the discharge of the duties of the office of the Gospel ministry? Answer: "Prayer!" What is necessary in the second place? Answer: "Prayer! prayer!!" What is necessary in the third place? Answer: "Prayer, prayer, prayer!!!" Miller's prayers were frequently answered in such a wonderful manner that it could be said, God had rewarded him openly. From experience he could put the following clause in the Discipline, which is found at the end of Rules and Directions for preachers: "He that desires to be useful in the vineyard of the Lord must be fervent in prayer, love his brethren and sisters cordially, and pray much for himself and them in secret." Jesus prayed thus, and all true ministers of the Gospel *follow him*. [R. Y.]

after completing the work, I could once more visit my brethren in Christ, to edify myself with them in the Lord. My great weakness hindered me very much in writing, and led me to the thought that I could not finish my work; for my back and other members of my body often trembled on account of weakness and pain. Other obstacles also appeared, so that I sometimes thought that the Lord had permitted them to come upon me to hinder me in writing, since perhaps it might be better and more acceptable to God if my history would remain unpublished. But as soon as I wrote again I realized the blessing of God, and believed if it displeased him he could easily prevent it, but if, in accordance with his will, also assist, and I had no preference between the two, only so that God's honor and the welfare of my fellow-men might be promoted. I spent over four weeks at this work; in part I copied it from my papers, and partly wrote from memory, and I know, as also my conscience testifies, that I have written the truth. Thanks be to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who permits me to realize his grace and love, and who has given me not only the will, but also the ability, so that I am more separate from the world to-day than I was when I formed the above resolution—and it has also already proved a blessing in my own household.

To-day I visited my sick Brother Dreisbach, and

had much blessing in prayer. If it should please the Lord to spare my life I will write more about his goodness toward me. Oh, that my short life might be consecrated to God alone, through Jesus Christ! Amen.





## APPENDIX.

## HIS LAST SICKNESS.

FROM the time George Miller had that remarkable dream, in which the angel smote him on the breast, he was in poor health, and often endured much bodily suffering, still, he preached occasionally, and assisted at "big meetings," but during the last eight years of his life he was not able to serve a charge. Finally the time arrived when he should finish his course. In the month of December, 1815, he was confined to his bed by consumption. For more than three months he suffered severe pain, but, at the same time, enjoyed the consolations of the Lord, and saw his redemption approaching, full of the assurance that Christ was his life, and to die his gain. Three days before his departure he was attacked by severe pains. On the 5th of April, 1816, he exchanged time for eternity in Union Township, Union County, Pa. His last words were: "I know that I shall be saved." His remains were interred in New Berlin, Pa. Bro. H. Niebel preached the funeral sermon from Rev. 3. 10: "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall

come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."

LITERARY LABORS OF GEO. MILLER.

Inasmuch as Miller concludes his autobiography with remarks about his writings, it may on this account, and for other reasons, be appropriate to add a few items here. George Miller's literary labors from 1809 until 1816 were in themselves not insignificant, and to the Association of great value. Of course his style was not flowery, and also needed some grammatical correction, yet his writings were not superficial, but pithy, theologically correct, and adapted to actual wants, and hence also truly practical.

The first edition of the Discipline, prepared by him, was for him a very great work, which often caused him to pray earnestly and perseveringly for wisdom from above. It appeared in 1809 under the following title: "Doctrines of Faith, and General Rules of Christian Church Discipline, and regulation for the so-called Albright people, as aiming at the nature and object of their union with God and among themselves, by the grace of God to work out their salvation, and to live and walk in unity of faith and chastity, in obedience to such rules according to the Word of God. Furnished for the press by George Miller, on the advice of the elders of this Association, and the endorsement of their Conference."

The little volume contains seventy-five pages, and is divided into fifteen sections. It contains no table of contents, which was often the case with books at that and earlier periods of time. The introduction of this Discipline, although imperfect, as was afterward seen, was nevertheless a great blessing to the Association. It is remarkable that Miller's sickness served the purpose of a more speedy compilation of the Discipline than would otherwise have been the case. About this point he makes the following remarks: "After a few weeks I arrived at home in great bodily weakness. Though it appeared in the beginning as if, through my sickly condition, the compilation of the Discipline would be retarded, yet divine Providence overruled it, so that it proceeded only the faster, and resulted in a more correct compilation." Whoever has eyes to see, can herein recognize divine Providence. Soon afterward at a Conference session, the necessity was felt of having Conference business rules, which the Discipline up to this time did not contain. Miller drew up such rules, which proved to be very useful, "for, from this time on," says he, "our Conferences became like unto the ante-chamber of heaven, in which we all were benefited."

Several Conferences in succession requested Miller "to write something useful for the Association," and in 1810 it was resolved that a brief manuscript

upon the life of Albright, which Miller had prepared, should be printed. After this he wrote an excellent little practical volume, called: "Practical Christianity," which was ordered to be published by the Conference in 1812, but for some reason did not appear until 1814. This little book should be read by every preacher and member of the Evangelical Association, since it has now also appeared in the English language.

Miller was also requested by this Conference, to compile an "Episcopal plan of government," which involved a considerable enlargement of the Discipline relative to Church government. Henceforth Miller labored at this work. In the year 1813, Miller promised the Conference "to finish the addition to our Discipline, if God would grant the grace." He had, at this time, already commenced the improvement and enlargement of the Discipline, and labored at it until his decease, in 1816.

In 1815, after another attack of sickness, Miller resolved to write his autobiography, and completed it substantially as we have it now. This also has proved a great blessing. After Miller had died triumphantly in April, 1816, the Conference, which met in June following, ordered John Dreisbach and H. Niebel "to collect together our entire Discipline." In the diary left by Dreisbach we find the following notice: "Monday, the 17th of

June, I arrived at home, and Bro. Niebel and I labored this week at our Discipline, to arrange it and prepare it for the press, and God gave us great grace in this work and blessed us." Again: "Monday, the 24th of June, and throughout this entire week, Bro. Niebel and I were again at work collecting and arranging the material for our entire Discipline and large Hymn-Book."

From this time of the Conference mentioned until the General Conference—the middle of October of the same year, hence four months only—Dreisbach and Niebel worked but two weeks at the arrangement of the Discipline, besides preparing a large Hymn-Book, and they could then already present the Discipline to the General Conference, which body approved and ordered it to be printed. The remainder of the time Dreisbach spent in traveling and preaching, as his journal shows. Miller had done so much preparatory work, and so thoroughly, that all that remained to be done was to have it properly arranged. In 1817 the second edition of the Discipline appeared under the following title: "*Articles of Faith and Discipline of the Evangelical Association, besides the object of their union with God and one another.*" This book contains 144 pages, has proper divisions in chapters and sections, and is, excepting a few changes, substantially the Discipline which we now have. We notice here:



1. How very remarkable it is that Miller, through his inability to serve a charge, from 1809, was led to "*write*" the Discipline and other necessary works, and that he was not only the author of the first edition of the Discipline, but substantially also the compiler of the second.

2. That Miller prayed earnestly for light and strength in preparing the Discipline, that Satan attacked him with severe temptations during the time he was engaged in this work, and that the little volume was so signally crowned with divine favor—these are significant facts.

3. That Dreisbach and Niebel were so richly blessed, while laboring in the preparation of the second edition for the press. This also is remarkable.

The Discipline of the Evangelical Association is not a mere human product. Under the providence of God it was designed to fill a felt want, and was written by men of earnest prayer, under the influences of the Holy Spirit, as the blessed results of this book abundantly prove. The Holy Scriptures, of course, only are inspired, yet this book of Discipline is also worthy of our highest esteem and cheerful obedience, as it is based on the Word of God. Hence, the earnest questions put to every applicant for the ministry: "Are you acquainted with our Articles of Faith?" "Will you obey and defend them?" Acquaintance with our Articles



of Faith, and a promise to obey and defend them, are thus made the conditions of entrance into the ministry. Were the Discipline a mere human work, such conditions could not by any means be made.

There was a time when not only the ministers constantly carried the Discipline with them, but many members also had it in their pockets, together with the New Testament. This "rule-book," as it was often called, was highly prized and much studied. We will not say how it is in this respect at the present day.

In consideration of the previously mentioned facts, it is plain enough that George Miller was the first literary author in the Evangelical Association, to a greater extent than has hitherto been recognized. "Honor to whom honor is due."

#### PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS.

George Miller's person is described by those who knew him, as follows: He was nearly six feet high, and quite strongly built. His face was oblong, his forehead high and full, had dark eyes, quite a large nose, prominent cheek bones, black hair, red eye-brows, rough skin and large hands. He shaved his whole face, wore rather coarse, home-made clothing, yet dressed in a neat and tidy manner. In his conversation he was considerate, and always spoke to the point, mostly in a gentle manner, but when he considered it necessary, also

very decidedly. His manner of preaching was both animated and instructive, he could both "shine and thunder." He often selected his texts upon his knees, with the open Bible before him, and then studied them with much meditation and prayer. He divided them systematically, and endeavored to present the truths contained therein in a clear and impressive manner. Not seldom was it the case that his spirit was led so deeply into the truth, that he himself, as it were, was overcome by it, and so overwhelmed by the power of God, that he stopped in the midst of his sermon, and praised God with such power that every person was affected by it. Very often he preached with such victorious faith, that many of his hearers, even scorners and persecutors, dropped to the floor like dead men, and when again restored, they called upon God for the forgiveness of their sins. He was an active pastor, and usually talked directly to persons about their soul's salvation. He also paid attention to the children, and tried to lead them to Christ through catechetical instruction and exhortation.

From an old document that was added to his autobiography, we glean the following facts: "Miller's strong power of discernment, discretion, fearlessness, and his other abilities to build up the Church and spread the Gospel, cannot well be adequately described. In faith he was heroic, for

his confidence in God's help was great. In the hottest persecution he would not let his courage sink, nor did he spare himself, if suffering was at hand. When the heat of persecution was the greatest, he could infuse courage into his brethren. Neither allurements nor threatenings could move him from carrying out the Lord's commands. In the struggle against the enemies of the kingdom of Christ he constantly took the lead.

He was very useful to his brethren in the Gospel, and was beloved and highly respected as a father among them. He conducted himself as a true shepherd towards the members of the Association, and led them in counsel and action. After Albright's early departure, these facts were especially realized.—To the sincere Christians he was a precious gift of God, and was received by them almost as an angel; but to the lukewarm professors he was a pungent salt, for he reproved their hypocrisy very sharply, therefore he was hated by them as well as by the world. His preaching was not in enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and power, so that often the power of God came upon the entire congregation. At "big meetings" he was especially diligent to elucidate and inculcate the necessity of growth in grace and advancement in the divine life, and to encourage believers to *follow after the sanctification of their souls*. But his

chief aim was *properly to instruct his ministerial brethren, since he well knew that the building up of the Church was dependent upon wholesome and pure doctrines. In this matter he was profoundly experienced, and also possessed a special gift to speak and preach about it.*

In the maintaining and execution of discipline he proved himself steadfast, and was no respecter of persons. Before his departure he had the pleasure of seeing the Evangelical Association grow and increase under the regulations which had been adopted, and how God awakened, and with his Spirit's power qualified young men to prosecute his work and extend its borders.





LIFE AND LABORS  
OF  
JOHN DREISBACH,  
EVANGELICAL MINISTER  
AND THE  
FIRST PRESIDING ELDER IN THE EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION.



“FOR HE WAS A GOOD MAN.”—Acts 11. 24.





## PREFACE.

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THE compiler frequently spoke with Father Dreisbach in relation to Albright, Walter and Miller, but could not persuade him to write his own autobiography for this book, ordered by General Conference. The reason he assigned was, that he did not consider himself worthy, nor deserving to have his biography published with that of the other brethren, especially as he had been compelled to sustain a local relation so great a part of his time. Finally, however, he consented to write a brief sketch of his life up to 1870, for the "*Living Epistle*," which is reproduced here.—Modesty was a pre-eminent trait of his character.—Still, we have attempted in a measure to portray his noble, Christian and blessed life, drawing from such documents and facts as were available. May this effort be made an abundant blessing to the Church, which he so dearly loved, as well as to all the readers.

R. Y.

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LIFE AND LABORS  
OF  
JOHN DREISBACH.

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Autobiographical Sketch of Rev. John Dreisbach.

I was born June 5th, 1789, in Buffalo Valley, then Northumberland County, Pa. My parents were Martin and Sabina F. Dreisbach; (the Lord be praised for such good parents as *they* were. However, their pious examples and Christian instructions were not properly heeded, and hence, early in life, I went astray into sin and wickedness, and continued thus until I was seventeen years old. The Spirit of Truth strove with me all this time, and frequently I tried to become a praying youth, and break off my bad habits, but soon relapsed into sin, and into even a worse condition than before. Again and again the good Shepherd called me, until I feared it would be for the last time. Therefore I gave ear to his call, and returned to God in sincere penitence and earnest

prayer, seeking pardon and salvation from sin; day by day reading the Bible in order to understand the will of God concerning me. And while thus engaged, imploring divine mercy, I was one evening enabled to exercise faith in Christ, so that I embraced God's promised pardoning grace, and felt his love in my heart. Then was my sorrowing, grief, and mourning past, and I was filled with peace and joy, and love to God and man. I adored and praised the Lord for his mercy and loving-kindness toward me, a hell-deserving sinner, saved by the grace of God in Christ. Yes, I was happy indeed, and resolved, by the grace of God, to be faithful in his cause and service the remainder of my days. Such was my Christian experience in the month of November, 1806.]

On Whitsuntide, 1807, at a quarterly meeting in Penn's Valley, Center County, Pa., I received preacher's license at the hands of *Rev. Jacob Albright*, but did not get into the work till near the time of my becoming a traveling preacher of the Gospel. On November 6th, 1807, I left my parental home for the Conference held at Samuel Becker's, on Muehlbach, then Dauphin, now Lebanon County, Pa., as a candidate for reception into the traveling connection, and was received. An appointment was given me accordingly.

I served, as a traveling preacher in the Evangelical Association, nearly fourteen years regularly,

the one-half of this time as presiding elder; was elected such in 1814, at an annual Conference in Buffalo Valley, held at my father's. My district embraced the whole of our Church at that time, extending in length nearly 300 miles east and west, and over 100 miles in breadth north and south. At this Conference the whole membership of the Evangelical Association was 1016, and the itinerant preachers numbered 13 in all.

During the first half of my first year's traveling I was often in company with Father *Jacob Albright*, and enjoyed his fatherly counsels and good Christian example, much to my edification; but I also had some severe trials to endure. What tried me most of all was the thought that perhaps I had made a mistake in coming out on the Gospel field as a volunteer, and in thinking the Lord had called me to the work, when, perhaps, it was only my own fancy. I also concluded that my gifts and qualifications were not such as were necessary to make me a useful preacher; and also that my preaching was of no use, because there were no conversions resulting from it, and that when these did occur in my meetings, they were effected by other preachers' labors. I often asked myself: "What can I do? Oh! what shall I do?" and lamented thus: "Oh, miserable man that I am! Oh, that I had waited longer for better evidence, as to my call to the ministry!" Yet, amid these



trials, I dared not now leave the field. I resolved to stand at my post of duty, and do what God would enable me by his grace to do. I prayed, I wept, I fasted, read the Scriptures, studied them prayerfully, tried to preach and struggled on as well as I could, and God gave me more light, freedom, and power to preach his Word, and I became more and more satisfied that it was my duty to continue to preach his blessed Gospel; and finally I delighted in the glorious work.

The last half of my first year I traveled on Northumberland circuit with Bro. George Miller, who had charge of the circuit; but, on account of sickness, he left me and the circuit December 26th, 1808. I was thus left alone on this extensive circuit, embracing Buffalo, Penn's, Brush, Sugar, Middle Creek, and Dry Valleys. Albright now being dead, and Miller disabled, John Walter and his colleague, with myself, three in number, were the entire itinerant force left; and during the Winter Walter's colleague was exchanged for John Erb. We had only three local preachers, and at the Muehlbach Conference, November, 1807, there was a membership of only 220. Those days were the days of small things concerning our Zion.

Though left alone on this large circuit, the Lord took good care of me, a poor stripling, and gave me success. Souls were converted, and the membership increased. A brother, Matthias Betz, a

young man, made a round on the circuit with me, and went with me to our annual Conference, April, 1809; also Bro. Henry Niebel, both entering the itinerancy at Conference, and became my colleagues that year on Schuylkill and Lancaster circuits, where our labors were blessed, sinners converted, and believers built up. This year, in compliance with an order of our last Conference, three of us were ordained elders at the house of Henry Eby, near Lebanon, Pa., during a general meeting there. The persons so ordained were: George Miller, John Walter, and John Dreisbach, the last of the three being only a few months over twenty years of age, and not yet two years on probation. John Erb, Matthias Betz, and Henry Niebel were present. This was the first formal ordination in the Evangelical Association. It was truly a solemn, as well as refreshing season for all.

I now felt myself, more than ever before, consecrated to God and his blessed cause, and my chief desire was to be useful in his vineyard. From this time on I felt firmer in the work, and had a stronger reliance upon God, trusting him to aid me in my Christian and ministerial duties; and thus I found Christ's yoke easy, and his burden light during my itinerancy on circuit and district, and even since then up to the present time. The Lord be praised for sustaining grace!

On April 4th, 1815, my beloved wife Catharine

departed this life in the triumphs of faith. Not quite four years after we were married death separated us. Those only who have experienced a separation, by death, from a beloved wife, can properly sympathize with others so bereaved. However, "all things work together for good to them that love God." Two years after my bereavement I again married. Our youngest son, John E., departed this life five years ago, seeing his way clear to fairer climes on high. The rest of our children are still probationers, as far as I know. We believe all of them embraced religion in their younger days. Oh, that all may prove, by a truly Christian character, that they still possess the blessed religion they embraced in early life. And may the unsaved among our grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, and all their descendants, become faithful followers of the blessed Jesus, with those already his, and remain such, is our parental prayer. So shall we all in due time meet in heaven.

During the last five years of my itinerancy in Pennsylvania, my nervous system became very much disordered, and it was supposed that, if I could rest a while, I might possibly recruit my shattered health, and nerve up again. Conference advised me to try it, and I located. But though my muscular system did recruit, it was not the case with my nervous system. My still frequent

preaching was unfavorable to my complete recovery. Hence I made fewer appointments, and remained on the invalid list. Meanwhile, by a thoughtless exposure, I was prostrated by a severe inflammatory affection, stiffened in all my joints, and became completely helpless. Oh, the pain that I suffered! However, the good Lord in mercy also delivered me out of this affliction. After five days and nights of dreadful suffering I found relief, and after having been for two months very much crippled, limping about on crutches, I was again restored. Soon after, in 1831, we emigrated from Pennsylvania to Pickaway Township and County, Ohio. During the two first years here I preached but a few times. After a seasoning, or rather acclimating by ague, my health improved, and I preached more, and enjoyed myself better in serving the Church than I could in anything else. A preacher being needed on Lancaster and Pickaway circuits in the Fall and Winter of 1839 and 1840, I once more served the Church as a traveling preacher some five months, but was obliged to desist in consequence of an attack of fever. Again, in 1851, a preacher was wanted on Pickaway circuit, and I served between two and three months; but, as before, had to yield to bodily afflictions. In July, 1853, I accepted the offered charge of the congregation at Dayton, Ohio, and was enabled to continue in the service

till the close of the conference year. At the Conference held in Dayton, 1854, I was put in charge of the Chillicothe mission, and arrived there June 1st, remaining until the following October, when I left for Cleveland, Ohio, having been called to take editorial charge of the *Evangelical Messenger*. I arrived there on the 25th of said month, serving in the above-mentioned capacity until March 18th, 1857, being then, on account of bodily infirmity, necessitated to resign my office. Soon after the issue of my last number of the *Messenger* we removed to this city, where we still sojourn, waiting for the coming of our blessed Lord, "Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." "Thanks be unto God for his (this) unspeakable gift." Thanks to God *for his free grace* that enables us to embrace Christ, by faith, as he is made unto us of God. Glory to God for a *free* and *full* salvation! Reader, believe it, pray for it, and you shall have it and enjoy it forever!

Behold! see what the Lord has done! From a small, a very small beginning, in the days of the apostles, millions have been raised up, saved, and taken to glory, and millions more are on the way. Behold! see what a blessed influence Albright and his unlettered preachers have exercised among the masses. From three itinerant preachers the num-



ber has increased to 550; from 220 members to nearly 70,000!\* God be praised for the increase!  
*Circleville, O., 1869.*

### John Dreisbach as a Traveling Preacher.

In his nineteenth year, a tender youth who had hardly been previously away from the parental home, Dreisbach associated himself with the greatly despised J. Albright to preach the Gospel, traveling through a rough country, and among a still rougher people, who were deeply sunken in sin and crime. What an undertaking!

Besides the severe persecutions and the great inconveniences, he also suffered severe mental trials, which he indicates in the short sketch of his life. Yet he pressed on and struggled through all these things by the help of God, becoming a faithful laborer and servant of Jesus Christ. He commenced his itinerancy in 1807 with George Miller, who had the supervision of the "old circuit," which extended into Dauphin, Lebanon, Lancaster, Berks, Bucks, Montgomery, Northampton, Lehigh and Schuylkill Counties, and numbered over thirty appointments, which were from thirty to forty miles apart. During the Winter Albright frequently accompanied him in his journeys and imparted to him much valu-

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\* Now over 120,000.



able advice and instruction. About this he still spoke in his old age with a great deal of emotion. He especially mentioned how patiently, though at times feeling it very keenly, Albright endured the most scandalous lies and slanders, which were set afloat about him while on his travels. On one occasion, while riding past a tannery in Allemengel, Berks County, the tanners stepped to the door and screamed: "Albright, you are a — — —!" (The epithet is too indecent to be printed.) Albright turned around to Dreisbach and gently said: "But, Johnny, this is bitter." However, trusting in God, they passed on without a reply.

On Easter, A. D. 1808, G. Miller and J. Dreisbach were appointed by Albright to Northumberland circuit. While in the act of parting with Dreisbach, A. said to him: "Strive even unto blood, and press into the kingdom of God." These were Albright's *last* words to Dreisbach, for soon after he entered into his eternal rest.

On Christmas, 1808, G. Miller took very sick, and left the circuit on the 26th of December, and young Dreisbach was left alone on this large field of labor, which embraced Buffalo, Penn's, Brush, Sugar, Middle Creek and Dry Valleys; but God blessed his labors with conversions. M. Betz, also a young man, was appointed to assist him. An example of the persecutions which these young ministers were compelled to suffer, the following

items, taken from the History of the Evangelical Association, page 48, will show:

“It was in the month of August, 1808, when John Dreisbach returned from a general meeting near Muehlbach, accompanied by a young brother, Andrew Wolf, in order to fill an appointment that evening in Jonestown, Lebanon County, Pa.; but as he had been disturbed while preaching there before, on his way to said general meeting, it was his intention to preach to the friends there, without giving public notice of it. From fear, not of the Jews, but of heathen-like Christians, the doors had been locked, and the window shutters fastened inside, before the services commenced. After singing and prayer, the sermon commenced; but as the exercises had, in all probability, been heard by some of the adversaries, a mob gathered in a short time, and, forcing the doors and shutters open, they rushed with a dreadful noise and with still more dreadful imprecations into the house, and thus put a stop to the exercises. The preacher then took a light and went among the crowd to restore order, but was seized by several ruffians and dragged toward the door; at the same time they treated him very roughly, and extinguished all the lights in the house. Those who dragged him hallooed to their companions, who were outside: *‘Boys, open the door, we have got him!’* They replied: *‘Give it to him; kill the priest!’*”

“The preacher was justly apprehensive of still worse treatment, if they should succeed in getting him out of the house; but how to get out of their hands he knew not. All at once it flashed upon his mind, as if God had revealed it to him, that if he would jerk himself up with all his might, and then suddenly fall down like a log, he might get out of their hands. He did so, and thus got rid of them, although he was still among the crowd in the dark. Now, as the ruffians were groping for him, they got hold of each other, letting torrents of blows descend on one another, each fancying that he was giving it to the *priest*. But while they were thus regaling each other, to their hearts’ content, with blows and pushes, he managed to get out of the crowd, and the mob got outdoors. Alarmed for the minister, some of the friends hastened out also, but were seized and very much abused by the mob. The landlord, Father P. Walter, was so much hurt, that the blood gushed from his mouth and nose. A sister was knocked down, and carried into the house for dead. And several more friends were likewise very roughly dealt with. This is *one* of the many examples of persecution and ill-treatment which the first ministers and members of the Evangelical Association often experienced. Similar occurrences took place twenty and twenty-five years later, in different places in the Counties of *Berks* and *Schuylkill*, Pa.

“On the following day the ring-leaders of the Jonestown mob, seven in number, were legally indicted by the brethren, and afterward delivered over to the County court. But they also brought charges against Mr. Dreisbach and some other brethren, vainly hoping to gain some advantages thereby; and when the case was tried by the court at Harrisburg, it seemed at first as if they would really be benefited by it. But, after all, they did not gain their end: the jury found them *guilty*, and acquitted the brethren. After the suit, the brethren remitted to their persecutors all their costs, thus showing them that they had not brought the suit against them from malice or revenge, but merely to teach them that the Evangelical Association enjoys the protection of the laws not less than all other religious denominations of the Union, and that they were determined to hold their meetings without being disturbed. The favorable issue of this prosecution had a very salutary influence on the public at large, benefiting other denominations as well as the Evangelical Association. Prior to this prosecution, tumults and disturbances of religious meetings were very frequent, but after this they were, for years, much rarer and less outrageous.”

At the Conference in 1809, Dreisbach was appointed, with M. Betz and H. Niebel, to Schuylkill and Lancaster circuit. He was also authorized to

print a catechism, which he had translated from the English. Soon afterwards G. Miller, J. Walter and J. Dreisbach were ordained elders, which was a solemn and blessed occasion to them. Through his ordination Dreisbach felt himself entirely consecrated to the Lord and his service in the Gospel, and from this time on he labored with much pleasure in the work of the Lord. His labors during this time were richly crowned with God's blessing.

In 1810 J. Dreisbach and J. Jerlitz were appointed to Northumberland circuit, and his labors there in the Lord were not in vain. It so happened during this year that Bishop Asbury, of the M. E. Church, preached in the town of Halifax, on the Susquehannah river, and the following day Dreisbach, Asbury and H. Boehm traveled together down the river towards Harrisburg. The interesting conversation which took place between these excellent men Dreisbach related to the author, and is given substantially in Dreisbach's own language in the History of the Evangelical Association, page 56, as follows:

"After we had, for some time, freely conversed on various religious topics, the bishop made me a very liberal and respectable offer, on certain conditions to unite with his Church. I was to withdraw from the Evangelical Association, and go with them to Baltimore to attend their Conference; there to join them, and to travel a year with Jacob



Gruber, who was then presiding elder, for the purpose of better acquainting myself with the English language, wherein Bro. G. might be very useful to me, that I might then be able to preach, according to circumstances, both in German and English; and I was to receive my salary as if I had traveled on a circuit, etc. Moreover, the bishop remarked that by being able to preach in both languages, I could make myself so much more useful, and that among them there would be less danger of my becoming self-conceited, and to fall away, than in my present position, etc. But, however enticing the offer and truthful the statement of the bishop was, yet I could not determine in my mind to take such a treacherous step toward the Evangelical Association. I therefore told the bishop that we considered ourselves called of God to labor principally among the German population, and that thus far our labors had not been in vain.

“To this he replied that the German language could not exist much longer in this country, etc. I rejoined that if this should ever be the case, it would then be time enough to discontinue preaching in German, and gave it as my opinion that this would not very soon occur, but that the German language would rather increase, at least as long as the immigration from the old world would continue. I then gave him my views, in which I expected my brethren to concur, and



made him the following offer: 'If you will give us German circuits, districts and conferences, we are willing to make your Church *ours*, be *one* people with you, and have one and the same Church government.' 'That cannot be—it would be inexpedient,' was the bishop's reply."

After passing some more remarks on this subject, they finally took, not far from Harrisburg, an affectionate and cordial leave of each other, when the bishop presented Mr. Dreisbach with Fletcher's portrait of St. Paul, embraced him, and bade him God-speed in his work. This conversation took place August 2d, 1810, and afterward these brethren never saw each other again.

The words which Bishop Asbury expressed upon the offer of Dreisbach: "That would be inexpedient," had a much greater bearing than the bishop supposed. Thereby both Churches were kept separate, and the Evangelical Association was necessitated, in order to do justice to her calling, to labor on as an independent denomination, by means of which, no doubt, greater good was accomplished, especially among German Pennsylvanians, and also German immigrants.

In 1811 Dreisbach, H. Niebel and M. Becker were appointed to Franklin and York circuit. The brethren found access into many new preaching places, and a number of families were converted to God.

- In 1812 Dreisbach, with a young colleague, was appointed to the "mission in the State of New York;" but the mission was discontinued for practical reasons, and then Dreisbach was sent to Northumberland circuit. During this year D. began to suffer in body. Nervous debility and melancholy, through indescribable struggles, were brought upon him, so that he was frequently driven to the verge of despair. But God, in due time, helped him out of his trouble again, and afterwards he was only the more useful. These severe trials worked together for his good.

During the year 1813, Dreisbach and several other brethren were ordered to extend their work westward, forming new circuits, as also to make visits in an easterly direction. Dreisbach pressed across the Alleghany mountains, and opened the way into Western Pennsylvania to Somerset Co., etc., and at the next Conference he was elected the *first* presiding elder in the Evangelical Association.

#### John Dreisbach as Presiding Elder.

In April, 1814, after he had served about seven years as an itinerant minister, Dreisbach was elected presiding elder by an annual Conference held in his father's house. His district embraced the entire Evangelical Association of that time. It was about three hundred miles long, and North

and South about one hundred miles in width. He traveled it on horseback, and made many and difficult journeys over bad roads and through all kinds of weather. He sought out new preaching places everywhere, and preached nearly every evening during the week, and on Sabbath days. He was not only chairman of the Quarterly Conference, but also of the Annual Conference, and had the supervision of the entire work for a whole year, so that he practically discharged the duties of a bishop during the time, although having never been elected to the office. At the following Conference the work was divided into two districts, and H. Niebel elected as the second presiding elder.

Dreisbach labored with great success as presiding elder until he was compelled to locate, in 1821, on account of nervous prostration. In 1814 he attended four camp-meetings and eight watch-night meetings, which were greatly blessed with awakenings and conversions. About a "big meeting," which commenced on the 21st of May, at the residence of Bro. Spangler, in Brush Valley, Pa., he relates the following: "I preached first from this passage: *'Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.'* First I spoke of man's depraved self-will; secondly, of the will of God; and thirdly of obey-

ing God's will. I felt very poor in spirit to-day, but also greatly comforted. I was very much concerned for the success of the meeting. Bro. George Miller preached from the passage: '*Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.*' I realized a wonderful victory, and was greatly edified by Bro. Miller's sermons. The Word of God penetrated deeply into every heart. The friends realized the need of seeking more religion," etc.

Concerning a camp-meeting which commenced on the 1st of June, in Conewago, Pa., he relates the following: "The friends assembled to-day. In the evening Bro. Schauer preached and H. Niebel exhorted. I had great concern for the meeting, and had faith to believe that souls would be converted and sanctified.—June 2d. To-day I preached from the passage: '*Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit,*' etc. I had great grace, and felt much concerned for the unconverted. Some dropped down like dead persons. The friends were deeply convinced of the need of sanctification. At two o'clock Bro. Erb preached from the address of Paul and the alarm of Felix. After the sermon I exhorted penitents now to look to Jesus by faith, and told the friends that they should believe unto sanctification, and requested all who were willing to do so, to raise their hands, after which we

engaged in prayer. There was a special cleansing power of God among us. Many, according to their testimony, received the grace of sanctification. I do not know whether I ever felt the power of God stronger in me than to-day, while preaching on the subject of holiness. My body and soul were quickened, and I realized myself what I preached to others. God be praised for it! This meeting was richly blessed with the experience of conversion and sanctification."

At a camp-meeting held on the land of Daniel Bertolet, on the 31st of August, Dreisbach preached from 1 Tim. 6. 12. He "had great grace to preach both the law and the Gospel, to the believing and the unbelieving. It had a powerful effect unto the sanctification of many." At this meeting a backslidden minister was reclaimed, and a number of sinners were converted. Concerning an experience meeting held during this meeting, he says: "To my recollection I have never heard more sound testimonies of sanctification than at this meeting. Many also felt the need of it very deeply."

On the 31st of May, 1815, a camp-meeting commenced in Jonestown on the land of a man named Faber. Here the preachers first consulted with each other how the meeting should be conducted. Dreisbach preached from 1 Peter 1. 13-17. He says: "God blessed me richly while preaching



regeneration and sanctification through faith. Converting and sanctifying power came upon us. God be praised, it penetrated body and soul! I believe that many of the friends were renewed and strengthened in holiness." John Walter and other brethren also preached very successfully at this meeting. The fruit of this meeting consisted of fourteen conversions, and "twenty-eight professed sanctification."

According to a short report of a camp-meeting which began on the 31st of August, 1815, at Bro. Seitz's, God's Word was richly blessed. Dreisbach says: "God be praised for his blessing and grace! Twenty-four souls were converted, and sixteen professed sanctification."

On the 30th of November, 1815, Dreisbach went to Philadelphia "to buy a printing-press for the Association," which he purposed to donate to the Church. During this business transaction "the Lord stood by him, and he realized divine peace." The printing-press, types, etc., cost \$366, the box into which the things were packed cost \$3.64, journey and lodging in Philadelphia \$5.30, a strap for the box 14 cents. Total \$375.08. *This was the beginning of the Publishing House of the Evangelical Association!* What a difference between *then* and *now*! Dreisbach certainly could not have the faintest idea of the large business which would grow from such a small beginning!



On the 10th of August, 1817, he wrote the following lines :

*“Mein Leben heisst ein Wandern,  
Ein Tag, der folgt dem andern,  
Ich eil’ zur Ewigkeit,  
Mein Pilgerlauf geht täglich fort  
Aus einem in den andern Ort,  
Bis ich verlass’ die Zeit.*

*“Dann erst ist mein Tagwerk aus,  
Wann ich komm ins Vaterhaus,  
In das verheissne Erbe;  
O Jesu Christe, steh mir bei  
Und mache mich vom Uebel frei,  
Damit ich selig sterbe.”*

JOHANNES DREISBACH.

Thus this servant of Christ traveled from place to place, preaching the Gospel of God to his fellow-men, to the salvation of many souls, and the upbuilding of the work of God. Professors of religion were earnestly and clearly taught the necessity of growth in grace and of following after holiness, and not without fruit, as his camp-meeting reports abundantly prove. The doctrine of entire sanctification was preached distinctly, and occasionally energetic measures were adopted. Seekers of sanctification were called to the altar,

specially to pray for this grace, and sometimes they were also requested to express their determination and the experience of a present faith in Christ as their sanctification by raising their hands, which was frequently followed by mighty outpourings of the grace of God. Of course, this never became a stereotyped method, but other means were also adopted, as time and circumstances seemed to require, and as the Spirit of the Lord directed. Definite measures, which are judicious and adapted, either while laboring with sinners or Christians, are old-evangelical, as well as Biblical.

Dreisbach very frequently consulted his brethren in the ministry as to the best means and methods to be used to further the work of the Lord, especially when they were together at camp-meetings. An excellent example for imitation. The work on such occasions lay so heavily upon his heart, that at times at the beginning of the meetings, he would be literally "bowed down." But there also usually followed a mighty victory of the Gospel in the camp in the conversion of sinners and the sanctification of believers. Here all levity and endeavors to preach great sermons were discarded.

At quarterly Conferences Dreisbach thoroughly examined the condition of the work, and gave instructions to preachers and officers in the Church, and corrections, when necessary, in such a manner that they were not soon forgotten. He

often observed fast-days during his arduous travels, and prayed much with tears for the salvation of sinners. He read his Bible faithfully, as also the works of Wesley, Fletcher, Luther, Calvin, Antonii, Kempis and others. Besides his arduous labors upon his district, he was active in visiting people at their homes, endeavoring to lead them to Christ. Frequently he made missionary journeys beyond the borders of his district into new localities, even into Canada, and took up new appointments. Such labors of this *first* presiding elder of the Evangelical Association were not in vain in the Lord. May all his successors in office follow him, as he followed Christ, then their labor will be constantly accompanied with blessing, and we will not soon again hear the proposition to abolish the office of presiding elder!

#### Dreisbach as a Preacher.

Dreisbach studied his texts and prayed much for light and the anointing from above. His good common-sense led him to arrange his texts well, in order to present them clearly to his hearers. It is said that good arrangement and comprehensiveness were prominent characteristics of his sermons. The fall of man, redemption through Christ, the law and the Gospel, were his principal subjects. His gestures and manner of expression corre-

sponded with the subject under consideration. When preaching about the enormity of sin and the terror of the law, his countenance, which otherwise was always cheerful, assumed a very stern expression, his voice became penetrating, and out of his large, clear eyes holy earnestness beamed forth on his hearers. It often happened that the unconverted were so affected and wrought upon under his preaching, that they sank helplessly to the ground and commenced to cry for mercy. On the other hand he spoke to penitents and brethren in Christ of Jesus and his full salvation with the tenderest look, voice and expression. He preached to Christians the need and privilege of entire sanctification, self-denial, and following Christ, with no little success, especially at general and camp-meetings. In his conduct he was not only unblamable, but also an example to all. His manly presence, his earnest piety, his faithful discharge of duty, and his exemplary conduct made him a man of great influence, so that it could be said of him, both as a Christian and a minister, he was "a burning and shining light," both for the Church and the world.

#### An Important Letter.

In 1869 Father Dreisbach wrote a very important letter to the author, in which he expressed his

great joy over the so-called "holiness movement," through which an earnest seeking and striving to apprehend Christ as a perfect Saviour, as he is made unto us of God sanctification was originated, and closes with the pithy and strong exposition relative to the doctrine of sanctification as contained in the Discipline as follows:

"With reference to writing for *The Living Epistle*, let me say to you that my physical condition is such that I must most respectfully decline the honor and good opportunity of assisting in so promising an enterprise for the promotion of many Christians to higher enjoyments in divine life and true piety, by an entire consecration of themselves to God through faith in Christ, and of gathering in many of those who are yet strangers to the converting and saving grace of God in Christ. It makes my old heart glad to learn of the strong help of correspondents from the published list of names. Perhaps, if spared, I may be enabled in future to throw in some crumbs. Do not look for much, and you will not be disappointed."

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"The doctrine of Christian Perfection in our Discipline from the beginning, was by the Fathers considered and held as the *established and standing doctrine* of the Evangelical Association on Chris-

tian Sanctification, as ‘the basis of Christian Perfection;’ and I hope our Church will ever hold this *truly Biblical doctrine*, faithfully teaching and living it, to the honor and glory of God. The Holy Spirit sanctify our ministers and the laity, is my prayer; and this he will certainly do as soon as they by faith consecrate themselves entirely to God in his blessed service.

“But if there ever shall be a time when the Evangelical Association rejects this *doctrine*, and discards it, then should ‘*Ichabod*’ be written in place thereof; for then ‘the glory is departed from Israel.’ Let us, however, hope and pray in faith that this may never be the case, but that Israel may go up and possess the land, and God may be forever glorified.”

These few lines contain a clear and very significant testimony for the doctrine of sanctification, as we had it from the beginning in our Discipline, and which shall also be adhered to, as the General Conference of 1867 unanimously resolved. To this let the ministry of the Evangelical Association at all times say, Yea and Amen!

John Dreisbach as a Member of General Conference.

As a matter of course, Father Dreisbach was always elected a delegate to General Conference, where he was regarded and treated as “the patri-



arch" of the Evangelical Association. His counsel and advice were always useful and well received by that body, although in later years he was somewhat reserved, as he had not been able regularly to labor as an itinerant for many years. However, he always, upon such occasions, expressed his grateful acknowledgments to God, and his great joy on being permitted to see with his own eyes how gloriously the work had prospered, and how much it promised for the future, especially in view of his own experience in the day of small things. At the General Conference, held in Buffalo, N. Y., in 1863, he was called upon at the opening of the session to deliver an address, of which the following is an abstract:

"Beloved Brethren, and who am I, that I should arise here among you, and address you!

"It is so long since I have been in the active service, that, as compared to you, I feel so insignificant, that I would much rather sit at your feet, than speak before you. Bodily I can be no longer with you in the work, but in spirit I am still with you, and rejoice in the glorious success that has thus far crowned your labors in the Lord." And truly the Lord has done great things for us. I remember right well when we were yet but a little flock, and almost every body thought he had a right to tread us under foot—it was the time of our great trials and insignificance; and when I

think of it, I am astonished at the great things the Lord has done for us. The instrumentalities were so few, feeble, and unassuming, that it is a miracle that so much has been accomplished. The Lord has done it. We had neither depth of knowledge nor scientific attainments, but we put our trust in the Lord, he has helped us, and sinners have been converted to God.

“The Evangelical Association may aptly be compared to a grain of mustard seed. How small it is, and yet it grows up to be a large tree; and thus small was the beginning of our Association, and now it has grown up to be a stately tree, under which we dwell and rejoice in our security.

“I rejoice to see so many capable men before me. I am no phrenologist, or physiognomist, and make no pretensions to other branches of the higher sciences; yet I believe I have some ability in judging men by their outward appearance, and I must say that the external appearance of this honorable body has made a most favorable impression upon me. I have great hopes for the future of the Evangelical Association.

“But, brethren, while I duly appreciate and inwardly rejoice over the enlarged, yet by the grace of God self-secured ministerial ability that you possess, as compared with us old ones, I would yet put you in remembrance of the important fact, that to be endowed from above is indispensable to

the right discharge of every official duty. Grace converts the sinners, sanctifies, and builds up the household of faith.

“Brethren! Love one another. Stand up for one another. If the character of one brother is assailed, or if he suffers in any other wise, then stand up for him, though he be the least of all; for in this wise many a brother, who else would have to go under, can be happily saved, and may subsequently become a highly useful servant of the Church — harmony, too, will thus be strengthened, and thus our power for good increased.

“Greatly do I rejoice in the glorious success of our foreign missions. When they were first opened I feared it was premature; but the success of the enterprise has justified it in a high degree. My wish and desire is, that our mission in the fatherland might be so strengthened and carried forward, that our Evangelical Association might become a great blessing to the same. As regards a Heathen Mission, I also think it is yet rather early for us to open it, especially so in view of the fact that the much desired and earnestly prayed for successful termination of our present war, will open before us large doors of entrance in the South, and particularly in the West, where our utmost efforts will be taxed, and where we, with less cost and exertion, can undoubtedly achieve more than in the distant heathen lands.

“True it is, that in the kingdom of God more depends upon faith than upon external means, nevertheless for Church enterprises, a Church’s ability must also be taken into account, and the wonders of faith occur oftener in the personal experience of Christians than in Church enterprises. I believe we should direct our chief attention to the great and continually opening West; but may the Lord hasten the time that we may also bring to the heathen his great salvation.

“Soon, soon shall I be gathered to my fathers, and I testify here and now, that I hope for salvation only through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

At the following General Conference, held in Pittsburgh, Pa., in 1867, Dreisbach was present for the last time, and took an active and deep interest in the affairs of the Church. As at that Conference a crisis had come, relative to the doctrine of entire sanctification, different doctrinal views being presented, it grieved his paternal heart very much. With sorrowful expression he one day addressed the writer: “Bro. Yeakel, where do you think this will end?” To the answer: “God watches over us, and he will guide all things right,” he gave his hopeful acquiescence. And as it was afterwards unanimously resolved to hold fast the doctrine of the fathers as recorded in our Discipline, he rejoiced

most heartily over it. At the close of that Conference, he offered the closing prayer, which, no doubt, will be long remembered by many. As a father prays for his children, so he prayed for the delegates and their co-laborers in the vineyard of the Lord, until all over the house tears flowed freely. Such simplicity, assurance and solicitude for the work of God, combined with a strong assurance of faith in the great Head of the Church for her future, was a fitting close of his connection with the General Conference of the Evangelical Association.

### Dreisbach as a Poet.

John Dreisbach was blessed with a variety of excellent gifts, among which may also be named his not insignificant poetical talent. He left among his effects a record of the hymns which he composed and translated, and which in due time appeared in the "Evangelical Hymn-Book," and in the "Spiritual *Viole*," as follows :

*(In the Evangelical Hymn-Book.)*

1. Ich bin der Herr dein Gott.
2. In Christo Ruh' verheissen ist.
3. Dreiein'ger Gott, wir weihen dir.
4. Zum Gottesdienst bin ich geboren.

*(In the "Spiritual Viole.")*

5. Die Welt vergeht am Ende.
6. Blast die Trompeten, blast. (Transl.)

7. O freudenvoller Gnadenthron.
8. O hoere doch, du Menschenkind!
9. Ihr jungen Leute, merket auf!
10. Komm Jung, komm Alt, zum Gnadenbrunn.
11. Kommt, Menschen, lasst uns sehen.
12. O Jesu, komm doch selbst zu mir.
13. Schaff in mir, Gott, zu deinem Dienst. (Transl.)
14. Die Nacht der Suenden ist nun fort. (Transl.)
15. Jesu, O suesse Liebe du!
16. Liebe Brueder auf der Reise.
17. Hoert, wie die Waechter schrei'n. (Transl.)
18. Ihr Zionshelden, auf zum Streit!
19. Dornig ist die finstre Wueste.
20. Gott fordert allererst von uns.
21. Wir reisen heim zum Himmel fort. (Transl.)
22. Kommt fort, Gesellen, in Truebsal. (Transl.)
23. Ich will mich nun vergleichen.
24. Ich bin ein armer Pilger.
25. Ach meine Seele, denke nach.
26. Mein' Seel' ist so herrlich. (Transl.)
27. Den Weisen schien ein neuer Stern.
28. Herr Jesu Christ, O Gottes Lamm!
29. Verrathen ward des Menschen Sohn. (Transl.)
30. Schau dort, mein Heiland. (Transl.)
31. Ich weiss ein Land voll reiner Freud'. (Transl.)
32. Jetzt scheiden wir dem Leibe nach.
33. Nun, liebe Brueder, scheiden wir.
34. Wie praechtig ist der Nam'. (Transl.)
35. O Schoepfer aller Creatur.

The above list extends to 1863, but it does not contain the English hymns which Dreisbach composed before and after that time. Among the above there are some very excellent hymns, which



appear in the last issue of the greatly improved German Hymn-Book of the Evangelical Association, as, for instance: "Ich bin der Herr, dein Gott;" "In Christo Ruh' verheissen ist;" "Dreiein'ger Gott, wir weihen dir;" "Komm Jung, komm Alt, zum Gnadenbrunn," etc. So also among his translations, as: "Ich weiss ein Land voll reiner Freud'"; "Die Nacht der Suenden ist nun fort," etc. Through these useful hymns Father Dreisbach still speaks and *sings* upon earth to the glory of God and the edification of believers, and at the throne of God he unites with the great company of harpers in singing in perfection throughout eternity the song of Moses and the Lamb.

### John Dreisbach as a Statesman.

As the reader has learned from his short autobiography, Father Dreisbach was obliged to locate after he had spent a number of years in the itinerant ministry, and as presiding elder had done hard work in the vineyard of Christ. In the neighborhood in which he resided he was generally respected on account of his talents, his noble character and true piety. His person, manner of life and influence were of such a nature that he was universally esteemed. He had a patriarchal appearance. His neighbors and friends came to the conclusion that he was a proper person to rep-

resent them in the Legislature of Pennsylvania, and they nominated him as candidate of his district for the House of Representatives of Pennsylvania, and he was elected by a large majority. He served two years, viz.: 1828 and 1829, as Representative, and exerted a good influence upon his colleagues.

Many years ago the writer heard a respectable gentleman, who had served as Representative with Dreisbach, speak of him very favorably, eulogizing his good sense and noble bearing. This gentleman also remarked that Dreisbach reproved sin, and at his boarding-place he was sometimes found in his room upon his knees, which made a good impression.

While he was in Harrisburg, he frequently went upon adjoining circuits on the Sabbath-day and assisted in the services of the Master. At that time there arose in Pennsylvania and other States a strong movement against "Free Masonry," and as he was called upon publicly to express himself, he took a strong position against it, and was defeated in 1830, as an anti-Mason candidate, through political party influence, and that closed his political career.

It is truly remarkable, that, while the ministers of the Evangelical Association in Eastern Pennsylvania were violently persecuted and branded as heretics, false prophets, as a fanatical rabble,

which should be exterminated from the earth—some even held they would bring on the seven-headed beast and the end of the world—yet one of their leading men sat in the halls of the Legislature at Harrisburg, and secured for himself the honest respect of the law-makers, and exerted a good influence among them! Those were peculiar times. But that kind of spiritual darkness has long ago been driven from the land, and this was largely accomplished through the blessed labors of the Evangelical preachers.

#### John Dreisbach as a Literary Man.

Our beloved Dreisbach was not by any means a classical scholar, but in every respect a self-made man, who had been surrounded with many unfavorable circumstances, which hindered him in his studies. Still, he acquired a pretty thorough knowledge of both the English and the German languages, so that he could speak both fluently and write them correctly. During the first years of his itinerancy, while still a mere youth, he translated a Catechism from the English into the German language, which was printed in 1809 for the use of the Evangelical Association. In 1816 he prepared, with the assistance of H. Niebel, the "*Geistliche Saitenspiel*" (Spiritual Psalter) in "complete book form," as the Conference had ordered, which was the first regular Hymn-Book

of our Church. It was received with much favor, and became a great blessing to the Association. During this year, with the assistance of H. Niebel, Dreisbach also completed the revision of the Discipline after George Miller's death, on which Miller had done the preparatory work. In 1830 H. Niebel and Dreisbach were appointed a committee closely to examine the amendments and changes of the Discipline adopted by General Conference, as also the translation of it into the English language.

Dreisbach wrote many excellent and instructive articles for the *Christliche Botschafter* and the *Evangelical Messenger*. He also drafted the form of a Conference seal, which is found upon the licenses of the preachers of the Evangelical Association. For a certain reason he afterwards wrote the following explanation of it for the *Christliche Botschafter*.

**"Conference Seal of the Evangelical Association.**

*"Worthy Editor:*

"It may not be unacceptable to many of your readers, to see an interpretation of the symbolical picture of our Conference Seal in the *Botschafter*; however, I leave it to your discretion whether or



not to publish the following: Here are three circles, one within the other; the outer circle is full of points clear around, in the center of the seal there is a cross, and between the circles these words are found in Roman Letters: '*Evangelical Association Conference Seal.*' All these things have their meaning: the three circles represent the Holy Trinity, for there are three that witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. 1 John 5. 7. That the Evangelical Association is engraven between these circles, represents that she confesses the triune God as her God, and that he owns her as a branch of his Church. But that the Conference is found nearer the center of the Seal than Association, is to signify that the ministry especially must be closely united and covenanted with God, if the Association is to be really prosperous in his service.

“The cross is to remind us of the atoning death of Christ, his offices and the doctrine of the atonement. Its being placed in the center of the seal is to signify that all our teaching must concentrate in Christ, the Crucified One, and must cluster around him, in order to be able to preach an unadulterated Gospel, and that we, as an Association, will follow Christ in child-like self-denial and in the daily bearing of the cross. It also indicates that Christ is not only the Creator and



Preserver of the Universe, but is also our only Redeemer, through whom all bodily and spiritual blessings flow to us, and that he is also worthy to receive honor and adoration from all his rational creatures, and that to him, as the fountain-head of all good, all thanks and praise shall be given. And finally, as regards the points at the border of the outer circle, they are to signify, that we are called of God to proclaim the Gospel of the Crucified One, in all parts of the world, as far as is possible for us.

“Whoever reads this brief explanation, can see what the founders of our Church had in view, and it also furnishes to each and all who are connected with us, an opportunity to examine himself, whether the same object is truly kept in view or not.

JOHN DREISBACH.

Pickaway County, Ohio, Jan. 5th, 1846.”

In 1820 Dreisbach published a plain sermon in pamphlet form, on “Slander,” which had a good effect. During October, 1854, he moved to Cleveland, Ohio, as Editor of the “*Evangelical Messenger*,” to which position he had been elected shortly before. He served in this capacity until the 18th of April, 1857, when he was compelled to resign his office on account of bodily infirmities.

Father Dreisbach was a good, practical editor, and made the paper useful and edifying to the



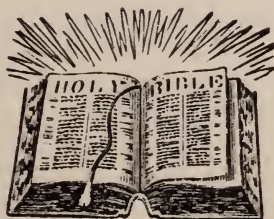
Church. On account of age and feeble health, he was not able to accomplish great things in the editorial chair, but what he wrote was pure and wholesome doctrine. He furnished the Church with a good paper. His labors in this respect were not in vain.

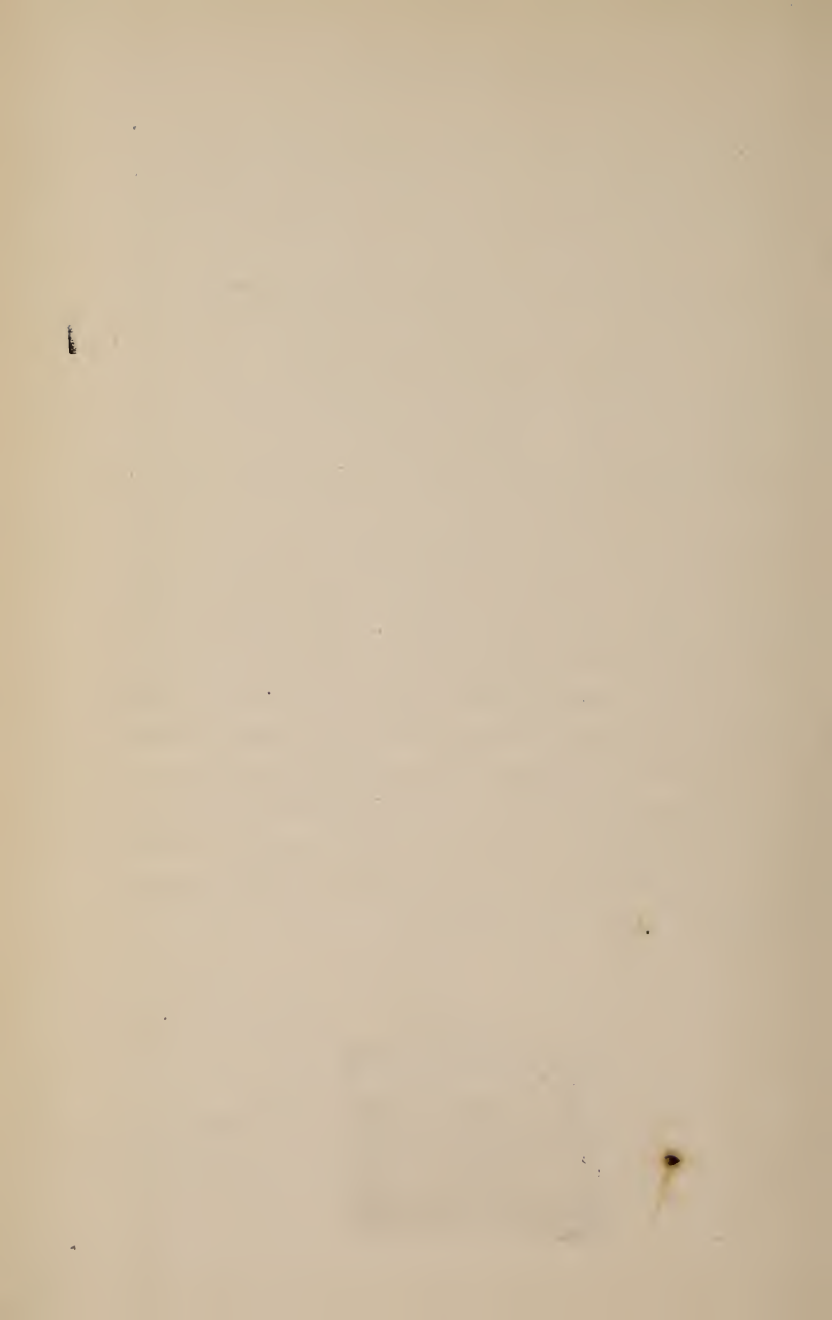
### Father Dreisbach's Departure.

After this man of God had seen the work of the Lord in the Evangelical Association from childhood up, and labored in it for many years, the time finally arrived when he, too, could say: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for my eyes have seen thy salvation." His last sickness continued about five weeks, and at times was very painful. But under the greatest sufferings he was an example of Christian patience and gentleness. He was entirely submissive to God, ready to live or die according to his will. In the report of his decease, among other things the following is mentioned: "It was a great privilege to see how this veteran of the cross of Christ descended into the Jordan of death, comforted in the full assurance of faith and undisturbed peace in Christ. Having committed himself to his Saviour, he fell asleep in his arms. During the last few days he could hardly speak in an audible voice. About five minutes before his departure

the arrow of death struck him, and he soon after ceased to breathe." He died on the 20th of August, 1871, aged 82 years, 2 months and 15 days.

Father D.'s funeral was attended by a large concourse of people. The funeral sermon was delivered by Rev. J. Lerch, from Numbers 23. 10: "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." His remains were interred in the Ebenezer cemetery, about two miles from Circleville, in the State of Ohio, where his dust rests, until the resurrection morn, when his body shall rise in honor and glory. What a triumph it will then be, when Albright, Walter, Miller and Dreisbach, with glorified bodies, shall greet each other, and, with an innumerable host of believers, who overcame through the blood of the Lamb, shall stand upon their graves and victoriously join in Paul's shout of triumph: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."





## SUMMARY APPENDIX.

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### GENERAL REVIEW.

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AFTER the editor and the reader have now considered the facts and incidents connected with the life and labors of the sainted Albright and his co-laborers, we will now review the whole in the briefest possible way, in the light of the Scriptures and the providence of God.

“If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought. But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it.” These truthful and wise words of Gamaliel, the teacher of Paul, prove that the Evangelical Association is not a work of man—for she has not come to nought—but that she is a work of God, hence could not be extinguished, even through the most violent persecutions and opposition. Since the work is of God, he also chose and qualified his “vessels” to commence and continue his work.

The Lord awakened Jacob Albright and led him to a living knowledge of himself, and a genuine experience of true religion, and *constrained*

him to go out into the Gospel field to lead others to the same light and salvation, which was at that time almost something unknown among the German population and Churches of Pennsylvania. How well adapted Albright was as an instrument in the hand of God to begin this work, we have already seen. But he needed vigorous help in order to awaken sinners and dispel the great moral darkness, and for this purpose the Lord gave him that mighty man of God, John Walter, before whose preaching in the demonstration of the Spirit, hardly any one could stand. What Walter almost entirely lacked in business tact and executive ability, Albright possessed in a large measure. But as Albright soon broke down and died, the Lord meanwhile had made provision for the continuation and better prosecution of the work, by calling George Miller, who was not only a powerful preacher, but an excellent leader, and who also had considerable ability as a writer, so that he could compile a Discipline, "Practical Christianity," etc., for the better organization and promotion of the work, which proved a great blessing to the Association.

Meanwhile also *poetical* gifts were developed in John Walter, so that he issued the first Hymn-Book for the Association in 1810. But as both Miller and Walter soon became physically unable to render much service, the Lord raised up John

Dreisbach, who was filled with the love of Christ and holy zeal to apply his manifold gifts in preaching, writing, supervising and guiding the work, up to the time when the Lord chose other men for the further promotion of his cause. How true was the assertion which Albright made to Dreisbach shortly before his departure: "Brother John, if it is God's will for you to be and remain an independent organization, he will take care of you also in this particular; men will be called of God who will accomplish what I am unable to do. The matter is in the hands of God; it is his cause, and he will also take care of it." The Lord be praised, it has been done! *The Evangelical Association is a work of God!* "*A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I, the Lord, will hasten it in his time.*" (Isa. 60. 22.) The Prophet Isaiah looked in the spirit into the future, when the Lord would accomplish this "in his time." This prophecy eventually pointed in the direction where we find its fulfillment. Some prophecies undoubtedly are being repeatedly fulfilled. The Evangelical Association can well be called the "smallest" among her sister Churches for many reasons:

1. Relative to her founder. In respect to scholastic attainments he was an *entirely* uneducated man—instead of having a diploma from some high school, he was only "a tiler." The



founders of other Churches were pious men, but also scholars, such as Luther, Zwingli, Melanchton, Calvin, Menno Simon, Wesley, Otterbein and others.

2. With respect to her ordination. All other religious denominations of importance claim in one way or other, directly or indirectly, to stand connected more or less with the so-called "apostolic succession." The ordination of our Church is similar to that recorded in Acts 13. 1-3, where no apostle was present. Because the ordination of the ministers of the Evangelical Association is of such a nature, a Synod composed of so-called highly educated men unanimously resolved that the Evangelical Association did not belong to the Christian Church—her ordination being invalid, and, accordingly, was thrown overboard by this resolution!

3. Relative to her ministry in general. As Albright was a tiler, Walter a mechanic, Miller a millwright, Dreisbach a farmer, so up to the present time most all of her preachers had been mechanics or farmers, and hence were considered by the world and some others "unlearned and ignorant men," Acts 4. 13, while other Churches had hosts of "Doctors of Divinity!"

4. With reference to her membership she was for a long time the smallest—but behold! (1)

She has become “a thousand,” viz.: an indefinitely large number. Nothing astonished the sainted Father Dreisbach more than this increase. She counts now more than *one hundred thousand* members. If the great host that have died triumphantly since 1800, and the other great host, who on account of the force of circumstances have united with other religious denominations, were added to the number, they would make *fifty thousand more!* And daily the numbers are being increased. (2) A “strong nation” has grown out of it. *a)* Through a well disciplined organization and systematic prosecution of the work; through prayer, liberal giving and powerful preaching. Each member—also the sisters, as did Moses’ sister—can use his influence for the work of God. *b)* An itinerant and popular ministry, that goes out to seek the lost—that denies itself for Jesus and for souls, and, clothed with power from on high, constrained by the love of Christ, achieves one victory after another, and *saves souls!* *c)* Missionary operations that extend over a great portion of North America, into Germany, Switzerland and Japan, and which daily press forward! *d)* A thriving Publishing House, and a literature that is excelled by few. *e)* Promising educational institutions. *f)* But above all the presence and operation of the Holy Ghost in the awakening and conversion of sinners, and the sanctification of

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believers, whereby the divine sanction and confirmation is impressed upon the work.

And this hath God wrought — not great scholarship, not high social position and great riches, not honor among men and the applause of the world. “In his time” — in the land of freedom into which immigration is pouring, where a variety of means and resources are proffered, where development and progress prevail as nowhere else upon earth — and where “the field is white for the harvest.” “Hasten” — quickly the Lord will accomplish this; — yes, this word “hasten” characterizes peculiarly the progression of this work.

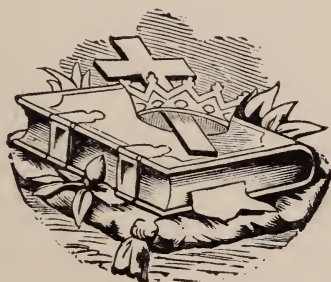
The Evangelical Association is a work of God, and she has a great and highly important mission to fulfill. But she can fulfill this mission only by proclaiming *everywhere* the pure Bible-doctrine which God has given her through the fathers; and does constantly *insist* upon *true* repentance, regeneration through faith, true sanctification of heart and life, and avoids compromise with and conformity to the world, and does *not follow in the footsteps of worldly-minded Churches*; — for her calling was evidently from the beginning to disseminate true, living and practical religion, yea, to propagate the Spirit and life of Jesus Christ, both internally and externally among degenerated Churches. If this calling is not heeded, and this fruit is not produced, and only the leaves of a

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hollow profession and a worldly form of religious worship remain, then surely the divine curse will come upon the unfruitful fig-tree, and *it will wither down to its roots!*

May the Spirit, who rested upon Albright, Walter, Miller, Dreisbach, Seybert, and many of the fathers, and operated so mightily through them, be poured out upon the preachers and members of the Evangelical Association in a double measure, even unto the end of time!

AMEN.

















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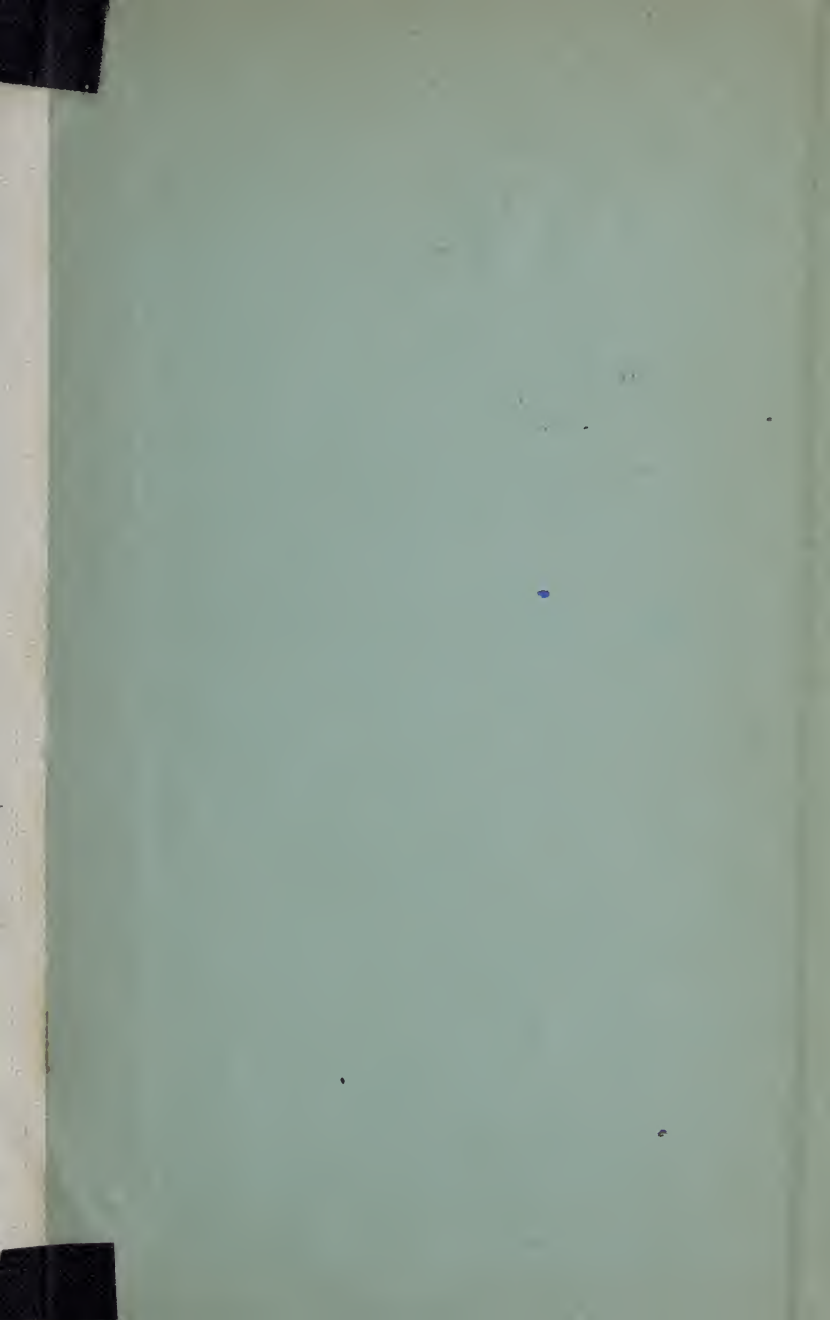
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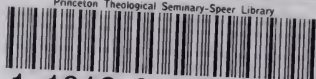


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